The Talking Cure in the ‘Tropics’

Akshi Singh
Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
2017

Statement of Originality

I, Akshi Singh, confirm that the research included within this thesis is my own work or that where it has been carried out in collaboration with, or supported by others, that this is duly acknowledged below and my contribution indicated. Previously published material is also acknowledged below.

I attest that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge break any UK law, infringe any third party's copyright or other Intellectual Property Right, or contain any confidential material.

I accept that the College has the right to use plagiarism detection software to check the electronic version of the thesis.

I confirm that this thesis has not been previously submitted for the award of a degree by this or any other university.

Signature: Akshi Singh
Date: 28 September 2017

Details of collaboration and publications:

Singh, Akshi. "'Will it not be Better?': Recognizing the Indian Psychoanalytical Society." In *Psychoanalysis: Philosophy, Art and Clinic* edited by David Henderson, 89-106. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015.

Singh, Akshi. "A Soldier in the Psychoanalytic Army: Claud Daly's Defence of the Garrison." *Psychoanalysis and History* 18, no. 1, (2016): 71-92.

Abstract

This dissertation examines psychoanalysis in a colonial context, tracing its history in early to mid-twentieth century India. A rich, neglected archive of diaries, letters, administrative documents, as well as psychoanalytical and literary writing in Bengali and English, are drawn on to offer an account of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society (est. 1921), and the anthropologists, doctors, army officers and political figures who were in different ways intimately involved with psychoanalysis. Reconstructing these narratives, and by means of a close reading of texts by Freud, I suggest that the understandings of temporality, sexuality and authority in Freudian psychoanalysis resist colonial discourses of progress and civilisation, notably in relation to the category of the 'primitive', thus frustrating attempts to appropriate the theory for colonial endeavours.

In this thesis, psychoanalysis is both an object of historical study, and a form of questioning, part of colonial history and a body of writing and theory available for contested readings. I discuss writing by two colonial psychoanalysts, Lt. Colonel Claud Daly, and Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill, which combines an investment in psychoanalysis with commitment to Empire, based on a desire for all-knowing psychic and political mastery. In contrast, the memoirs of renowned psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion, recounting his childhood in India, are read for their more complex psychic register and anti-colonial strain. Records left by dream-collecting colonial administrators in the Naga Hills, and documents relating to the trial and 'insanity plea' of revolutionary nationalist Gopinath Saha, show us the historical operations of psychoanalysis in collective life. In addition, literary writing by the modernist poet H.D., Temsula Ao, Bankimcandra Chatterji, and Rabindranath Tagore, offers another template for examining the issues raised by both the historical and psychoanalytical writing.

Contents

Note on Translations and Abbreviations **5**

Acknowledgements **6**

Introduction **9**
‘Will It Not Be Better’? 14
‘Your Far Off Country’ 20
The Talking Cure in the ‘Tropics’ 23

Chapter One: Freud in the Colony **31**
A Question of Translation, a Matter of Construction 36
The Uncanny Primitive 48
Civilisation: The Garrison in a Conquered City 54
Polymorphous Perversity 60
Family Romance: Leaders and Fathers 65
Ancestors and Ambivalence 69

Chapter Two: Know thy Neighbour? **71**
‘A Room Suitable for Psychoanalytic Treatment’ 75
‘The awful shame of appearing to be thoroughly scared’: Adventure and Psychoanalysis 89
‘Curious Beasts’: Shikar, Masculinity, and Sexual Anxiety 97
A ‘black sort of face’ of the Other: Ethics and the Problem of Disavowal 105

Chapter Three: Learning from Experience **111**
‘Mysterious Sweetmeats’: the Enigmas of Childhood 114
‘A Curzon-like form with leather exoskeletenous sheath’: Imperialism and anti-knowledge 120
‘Justice and Glory and So Forth’ : War Memoirs 124
The Psychosis of Everyday Life 130

Chapter Four: Heads and Dreams **137**
‘Huddled in Museums’ 142
‘Recording Dreams of Non-European Races’ 144
‘Fine Specimens’: Headhunting 154
Progress and Nostalgia 160
‘A Certain Uncanny Lilt’: Writing the Nagahills 164

Chapter Five: The Call of the Mother **175**
‘A Sensational Political Murder’: Insanity in the Courtroom 178
‘Unconscious Terrorists’ 183
‘Our Birthland is Our Mother’ / ‘Say *Bande Mataram* or we will kill you’ 204
Harsh Husbands: Aggression and Passivity 209
Other Mothers: *Gora* and ‘Breast Giver’ 213

Conclusion: ‘Something rotten in the state of’ **220**

Appendix I **228**

Bibliography **241**

Note on Translations and Abbreviations

I have relied on the *Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud* for the English translations of Freud's work, except in discussions that require a comparison with the German texts, or with other English translations. All Bengali texts are cited in English translation, though when required I provide my own translation of untranslated Bengali sources.

The original and sometimes unorthodox syntax of the archival sources has been maintained. In all quotations and citations, spellings of proper names correspond to the form used in the source quoted.

This dissertation is referenced in the format prescribed by the *Chicago Manual of Style*, but since most of the material quoted is either archival or literary, I have used square brackets to indicate all editorial interventions made by me, such as omitted text in quotations. The complete reference is provided in the first instance of citation, followed by shortened citations in subsequent citations. For archival sources, the full reference is provided for each citation, unless otherwise noted in the case of extensive quotations from the same source. The names of archives and their location are noted in full in the first instance of citation, and the following abbreviations are used thereafter:

BPS: British Psychoanalytical Society
IORPP: India Office Records and Private Papers
NAI: National Archives of India
NMML: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library
PRMC: Pitt Rivers Museum Collection
SFC-LC: Sigmund Freud Collection, Library of Congress.

Acknowledgements

This work wouldn't have been possible without the insight and generosity of my supervisors, Prof. Jacqueline Rose and Dr. Molly Macdonald. Jacqueline Rose's writing was a source of inspiration and hope for many years before I even considered a PhD, and I thank her both for her work, and for her insight and care over the last four years. Dr. Molly Macdonald has been an encouraging, bracing presence and I'm grateful for her kindness and support.

I would like to thank Queen Mary, University of London for supporting this work through the Principal's Studentship. A grant from the Postgraduate Research Fund at Queen Mary supported archival research in India. The graduate co-ordinators at the School of English and Drama, and the Research Degrees Office were always helpful and good-humoured about the endless form filling that has accompanied both research, and living in the UK. Mr. Ashim Mukhopadhyay at the National Library, Calcutta, was immensely helpful in an early stage of this research, and during subsequent visits. I would also like to acknowledge the support of Ms. Joanne Halford and Mr. Saven Morris at the Library and Archives of the British Psychoanalytic Society, and the staff at the National Archives Delhi, the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Delhi, The Freud Museum Archives, London, the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, The Freud Archives at the Library of Congress, Washington D.C., and of course the librarians at the Asian and African Studies reading room in the British Library.

Dr. Santanu Das provided many interesting references on the Pathans, and Dr. Matt ffytche helped me think through my writing on Claud Daly—I'm grateful for their suggestions. I have learnt a lot from Dr. Peter Howarth about poetry and teaching. For many thought-provoking discussions I thank the participants, and organisers of the Forum for Psychoanalytic Thought, History and Political Life in London, the Modern South Asia Workshop at Yale University, the Middlesex Psychoanalysis Conference, and the Centre for Study in the Social Sciences' Cultural Studies Workshop, Santiniketan.

Colin MacCabe first got me thinking about writing a PhD. Speaking with him is always a delight, and his support has meant the world. I also owe so much to Flavia Lambert's warm hospitality. Together they've given me some of the best conversations during the time I've been writing this dissertation.

The early part of this research was carried out in Calcutta and I'm immensely grateful to everyone who made it possible for me to work and live there. Speaking with Dr Bodhisattva Kar allowed me to negotiate the city through its libraries and archives, and the generosity with which he shared his thoughts and sources means that even after all these years I haven't been able to follow through on his extensive suggestions. I thank Prof. Sibaji Bandhopadhyay and Prof. Tapati Guha-Thakurta for letting me audit their courses at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences. Swati Chatterjee taught me how to navigate the National Library, Agniva Ghosh suggested many useful sources, Titas De Sarkar helped with Bengali, and accompanied me through the by-lanes of College Street in attempts to find obscure publishers, and Sebanti Chatterjee provided a place to stay on research visits. I wouldn't have been able to carry out this research without them or the many others who were so forthcoming with tea and conversation. Life and work in Calcutta wouldn't have been possible without Swathi Shivanand, who allowed me to make a home with her and the cats of Patuli. Her restless intellectual questioning and loving companionship were the greatest joy of my time there.

It is difficult to articulate my debt to Ashley Tellis—teacher, friend, provocateur—because his influence has been so formative. I thank him for opening up for me a world of literary and psychoanalytic writing, and for his uncompromising courage. In Delhi, Mohinder Singh helped me think about my research project, and Himani Upadhyay offered invaluable help during research visits. Amartya Kanjilal provided gossip, and the presence of Leki Thungon, Haripriya Soibam and Usman Javed has offered something intangible though infinitely valuable. In Oxford, Teja Varma has been a loving, supportive friend, and Aashique Iqbal provided guidance on the historiography of the North West Frontier, and a place to stay during research visits. In London, Eve Dickson offered her unique attention, Zahira Araguete-Toribo shared the joys and difficulties of everyday living as did CJ Kuncheria, Vidya Subramaniam

and Souad Usayran. Lovleen Bhullar has been the most delightful and forbearing friend and flat-mate over the last few months. Manuel Batsch suggested I introduce Bion "as a ghost into thesis"—I'm thankful for his many oblique insights. Rahul Rao has been an invaluable support and interlocutor. Chris Moffat, Daniel Elam and Alex Wolfers helped me think about m/Mothers, revolutionary terrorists and much else. Conversations with Samia Vasa, Kavya Murthy, Tanushree Kher, Asgar Qadri, Shazia Salam, and Aaranya Rajasingam have shaped this work in many ways. Akanksha Mehta has always offered solidarity, warmth and something to look forward to. Aimée Lê brought joy with cherished disruptions, poetry and hugs. For absolute bliss and companionship in melancholia I thank the anti-greek greeks: Danai Avgeri, Themistoklis Pantazakos, Sofia, Fil Ieroupolou. Before the PhD and all through it, Shad Naved has been a perceptive and considerate friend, offering the most practical and immediate help during research and writing, and also listening to things struggling to find expression. The Phrontisterion read the *Ethics* seminar together and performed Antigone, rituals that seem to have bound us into what some allege is a cult: I couldn't think of psychoanalysis without Rob Price, Natasha Silver, Jaice Sara Titus, Daniel Mapp, Marc Sutton. I cannot thank enough Phevos Dousos and Jordan Osserman—upon meeting whom London became home, dearest friends to whom I have been composing acknowledgements since we met, and yet now words fail me. Charles Morris has made what I thought would be a difficult period a time of great happiness and promise. Furry friends made their contribution: Daki, Tabaqui and Khabar Nawees, but most crucially Benjamin Franklin, who took long naps on many drafts of this dissertation and thus contributed his wisdom through osmosis.

Vaidehi and Ajit, my parents, have kept faith in me, and shown me things to love in the world—birds, fabric, music.

I wouldn't have been able to see this work through without Alex Ilias, who listens.

Introduction

Some of the objects that populated Sigmund Freud's consulting rooms in Bergasse 19, Wien IX, came with him to London. When the most precious of these, the "famous collection of Greek and Egyptian antiquities" and other "Oriental treasures" arrived, the poet and novelist H.D. sent the Professor a bunch of gardenias to "greet the return of the Gods."[1] Freud, quoting this in his note of thanks, added, "other people read: Goods".[2] These objects, both the ones that were returned to the Professor, and the ones that were lost, made another journey, coming to inhabit H.D.'s memoir of her analysis with Freud. Here they have the dual status of "Gods or the Goods".[3]

These objects have an exceptional mobility in H.D.'s account. They are symbols, hold associations that she is invited to release, and are portals into other times. Time, like the objects, is also particularly mobile—both seeming to move into each other: "[l]ength, breadth, thickness, the shape, the scent, the feel of things. The actuality of the present, its bearing on the past, their bearing on the future".[4] A multiplicity of times and places co-exist and coalesce in the analytic room that H.D. describes. There is the present moment, in which she adjusts the rug or sneaks a look at her wristwatch. There is the childhood home evoked by the porcelain stove, which transforms Freud's room into her father's study. The objects and paintings sometimes stand for another, civilisational, time—but one that becomes part of the present again when it reappears as dream symbols discussed in analysis. And right outside the room, there is the historical moment, stacked with rifles on the street corner, scratched in chalk on the pavements. In H.D.'s analogy, time was like a room, with a fourth dimension to it: "described and elaborately tabulated in the Professor's volumes".[5] In the account of her analysis, she would represent an attempt to articulate a relationship to time, to find the time that she was living through.

It is a moment of tension in the text, when Freud invites H.D. to look at the objects arranged on his desk: "I did not always know if the Professor's excursions with me into the other room were by way of distraction, actual social occasions, or

1. H.D. (Hilda Dolittle) *Tribute to Freud* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1985), 11.
2. H.D., *Tribute* ,11.
3. H.D., *Tribute* ,11.
4. H.D., *Tribute* ,23.
5. H.D., *Tribute*, 23.

part of his plan".[6] In an exchange where all gestures and words seem more than usually weighted with meaning, H.D. describes herself drawn to the objects on the desk, while at the same time trying to think of an appropriate response to them. Her response is articulated within her reading of Freud's desire: "I wanted then, as at other times, to meet him halfway".[7] She picked a statuette of a Hindu god—(Vishnu, by her guess)—to comment upon, partly incorporated into her elaborate personal mythology because of the S-shaped serpents that formed a dome over the god's head in the statuette. She could not, however, easily take in the object or enter it: "this carved Indian ivory which compelled me, yet repelled me, at the same time".[8] Her expression of interest in it, despite her ambivalence towards it, was directed by her reading of its place at the centre of the semi-circle of objects—seen as a mark of its importance to Freud.

This was desire predicated on an attempt to predict the desire of the other: the teacher, the master. In this, H.D. seemed to fail. Freud, "barely glancing at the lovely object", said that it was sent to him by his "Indian students".[9] He followed that with the remark: "On the whole, I think my Indian students have reacted in the least satisfactory way to my teaching".[10] It had then not been possible to meet him halfway. "So much for India, so much for his Indian students", she wrote.[11] In a gesture that seems to have an almost consolatory, restorative position in the text, right after this dismissal, Freud offers to H.D. a small statue of Athena ("He knew that I loved Hellas").[12] She had kept her place amongst his chosen students.[13]

---

6. H.D., *Tribute*, 68.
7. H.D., *Tribute*, 68.
8. H.D., *Tribute*, 67.
9. H.D., *Tribute*, 68.
10. H.D., *Tribute*, 68.
11. H.D., *Tribute*, 68.
12. H.D., *Tribute*, 69.
13. Mark Edmundson's account of Freud's last days also returns to this statuette of Athena:

> Marie Bonaparte, who sat on the stairs every day after Anna was arrested to make sure that the Gestapo did not come and take away the Professor, and who often seemed to know what Freud needed, sometimes better than he knew himself, soon smuggled away his favorite treasure: a bronze statue of Athena, a little more than four inches high. Athena's left hand is poised to grip a spear, which was lost; in her right hand she holds a libation bowl. She is wearing a Corinthian helmet, set far back on her brow, and a breastplate, decorated with the figure of Medusa, though in this rendition, Medusa is without her snakes. The statue had a special place in Freud's heart, symbolizing both wisdom and martial prowess; it was an icon of the mind as warrior, the intellect combatant. Marie Bonaparte held it for Freud at her home in Paris to present to him when he was finally free.

The Death of Sigmund Freud (London: Bloomsbury, 2007),119. See also Stathis Gourgouris' virtuosic reading of Freud's 1936 essay "A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis" as revealing the fantasy of Greece/Hellas as a desire for civilisation, where Hellas is "a reality that is necessarily,

In fact the dissatisfaction with 'India' had a precedent. H.D. writes that after her first series of sessions with Freud, which began in March 1933 and lasted a few months, she did not plan on returning to Vienna for further analysis. It was news of the death of the patient who saw Freud in the analytic hour preceding hers that brought her back. H.D. saw this patient, Johannes Jacobus van der Leeuw, as the person who would inherit Freud's work. As she put it to Freud: "I felt that you and your work and the future of your work were especially bequeathed to him. Oh, I know there is the great body of the Psycho-Analytic Association, research workers, doctors, trained analysts, and so on! But Dr. van der Leeuw was different."[14] In response, Freud said: "[y]ou have come to take his place."[15] H.D.'s account of van der Leeuw: "wealthy, influential, well-born. He owned vast plantations in the Dutch East Indies and had travelled in India for the purposes of occult investigation. He had contacted a teacher or young devotee there, had been influenced by the Eastern teaching, but that had not satisfied him" suggests that once again, the path to Freud was based on a dissatisfaction with, a dismissal of India.[16]

A passionate aviator, van der Leeuw had been killed in a plane crash when he was flying back from Johannesburg. Freud had said that he, along with van der Leeuw, had been concerned with the possibility, the tendency of the aviator to fly too high, and too fast. His plane had crashed just as Freud was beginning to think he had "found a solution".[17] The aviator may have been afraid of flying too high, but in another context, Freud himself was perhaps afraid of diving too deep. William B. Parsons, a scholar of religion, has discussed how Freud cited Schiller's poem "The Diver" when engaged by the Swiss poet Bruno Goetz in a conversation about Hinduism:

> The *Bhagavad Gita* is a great and profound poem with awful depths. "And still it lay beneath me hidden in purple darkness there" says Schiller's diver, who never returns from his second brave attempt. If, however, without the

---

constitutively, ideal". "The Punishment of Philhellenism" in *Dream Nation: Enlightenment, Colonization, and the Institution of Modern Greece*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 123.
14. H.D., *Tribute*, 6.
15. H.D., *Tribute*, 6.
16. H.D., *Tribute*, 5. J.J. van der Leeuw had been involved with the Theosophical Society, and the Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurthy (who later broke away from the Theosophists). The Theosophical Publishing House printed van der Leeuw's books *The Fire of Creation; The Conquest of Illusion;* and *Gods in Exile.*
17. H.D., *Tribute*, 6.

> aid of a clear intellect you become immersed in the world of the *Bhagavad Gita*, where nothing seems constant and everything melts into everything else, then you are suddenly confronted by nothingness. Do you know what it means to be confronted by nothingness? Do you know what that means?[18]

Parsons notes that Freud cites the same poem when discussing the oceanic feeling in *Civilization and its Discontents*, in a passage that touches upon yoga and mysticism: "[i]t would not be hard to find connections here with a number of obscure modifications of mental life, such as trances and ecstasies. But I am moved to exclaim in the words of Schiller's diver: '…Es freue sich/ Wer da atmet im Rosigten Licht'."[19] There was something about mysticism, associated with the East, that Freud seemed to have wanted to keep at a remove from himself.

The disappointment in, and repudiation of India in these instances is based on a slippage between India and a religion found to be unsatisfactory or frightening. This slide between India and spirituality also characterises much of the writing in two recent volumes on psychoanalysis in India: *Vishnu on Freud's Desk* and *Freud Along the Ganges*, where it takes the form of a slippage between tradition and Hinduism, Sanskrit and India's past. Jeffery M. Masson's "Sex and Yoga: Psychoanalysis and the Indian Religious Experience", and Wendy Doniger's "When a Lingam is Just a Good Cigar: Psychoanalysis and Hindu Sexual Fantasies" do not shy away from the allure of the exotic.[20] Masson advocates the use of psychoanalysis in studying Sanskrit texts, himself finding in them 'reaction formations' and 'defences'. Doniger's argument is that the processes of signification that psychoanalysis describes are universal, even if the contents are not. In her reading of Freud, though, the symbol always hides something sexual, and this reading shapes

---

18. William B. Parsons, "Freud's Encounter with Hinduism: A Historical- textual Overview" in *Vishnu on Freud's Desk: A Reader in Psychoanalysis and Hinduism,* ed. by T.G. Vaidyanathan and Jeffery J. Kripal (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 44. "The Diver" is a poem that "recounts the successful dive of a page into a whirlpool to retrieve a golden goblet. Challenged to repeat the feat for the hand of the king's daughter, he accepts, plunges in, and is not seen again. Much of the fame of the poem is due to the vivid rendering of the raging waves." Henry and Mary Garland, "Der Tauscher" in *The Oxford Companion to German Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 882.
19. Sigmund Freud, "Civilization and Its Discontents," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* in 24 vols, trans. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1961), 72-73. "Let him rejoice who breathes up here in the roseate light" Unattributed translation, *SE* 21:73.
20. Jeffery M. Masson, "Sex and Yoga: Psychoanalysis and the Indian Religious Experience"; Wendy Doniger, "When a Lingam is Just a Good Cigar: Psychoanalysis and Hindu Sexual Fantasies" in *Vishnu on Freud's Desk*. 235-249; 279-303.

her discussion of the symbolism of the 'lingam' in various myths and stories, though the essay does not make clear how that relates to the 'Hindu sexual fantasies' of the title.

Sudhir Kakar and Alan Rolland, two practising psychoanalysts who have written about psychoanalysis in India also seem in a hurry to arrive at, and diagnose the particularity of the Indian/Hindu psyche.[21] Hortense J. Spillers made the important point that the universalism of psychoanalytic theory must be "invigilated at its limit" in order to avoid "assimilating other cultural regimes to its modes of cultural analyses too quickly and without question." [22] Even bearing this in mind, I find that work by Kakar and Rolland, in its uncritical account of the 'Indian', prevents rather than encourages such investigation. In this dissertation I hope to show that when the history of psychoanalysis in India is approached outside of the terms of this glissade between India and mysticism, a new set of questions open up through which we can read this encounter both historically, and in terms of a critical engagement with psychoanalytic theory.

The traffic in goods, the place of gods, and time—as a belief in progress as well as the intimations of its impossibility, are key to an account of psychoanalysis in India. Also unavoidable in any discussion of psychoanalysis as an institution is the question of what it meant to be Freud's students—never an easy question, let alone position, and one that was particularly complicated at the time of H.D.'s analysis—when swastikas rained like confetti on the streets of Vienna. By the time of H.D.'s analysis, Freud had given, in *Civilization and its Discontents,* an account of the psyche in which the agency which is meant to be the voice of conscience is intolerant, harsh and demanding of increasing sacrifice. Guilt arose not just from fear of an external authority, but also from the authority that had been internalised as part of the psyche: "threatened external unhappiness–loss of love and punishment on the part of the external authority – has been exchanged for a permanent internal unhappiness, for the tension of the sense of guilt."[23] Here, Freud's description of the

21. See Alan Roland, "Multiple Mothering and the Familial Self" in *Freud Along the Ganges: Psychoanalytic Reflections on the People and Culture of India* ed. Salman Akhtar and Pratyusha Tummala Narra (New Delhi: Stanza, 2008) 79-90; Sudhir Kakar, "Clinical work and cultural imagination"; Alan Roland, "Shakuntala" in *Vishnu on Freud's Desk*, 216-231; 401-424.
22. Hortense J. Spillers, All the Things You Could Be by Now, If Sigmund Freud's Wife Was Your Mother: Psychoanalysis and Race," in *Female Subjects in Black and White: Race, Psychoanalyis, Feminism* ed. by Elizabeth Abel, Barbara Christian, Helene Moglen (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 138-139.
23. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:128.

superego sounds like his description of the leader-as-tyrant in *Moses and Monotheism*: "jealous, severe and ruthless"[24] and "domineering, hot tempered and even violent."[25]

Literary critic and biographer of Freud's last years, Mark Edmundson, writes that just as Freud was offering this radical critique of authority, he was also complicit with the consolidation of authority in the persona of Sigmund Freud, as well as its entrenchment in the International Psychoanalytical Association.[26] However, the ineluctable ambivalence towards authority remained unacknowledged and unanalysed in the manner in which the institutionalisation of psychoanalysis took place. This view is shared by Moustapha Safouan, an Egyptian psychoanalyst and Freud translator. He argues that the process of the institutionalisation of psychoanalysis performed "the myth promoted by Freud in *Totem and Taboo*, of a 'fraternal' deal dictated by a murder not so much actual as unable to be acknowledged, or rather able to be so even though it had not actually taken place; it was the end-point of a set of convergent repressions."[27]

If psychoanalytic institutions could act as though they were oblivious to the insights of psychoanalysis, then perhaps the question to ask of Freud's 'Indian students' is not *why* they were found to be unsatisfactory, but *what* it was that was wanted of them, which they failed to provide. This brings us up against the question of how an object is recognised, or constituted through what may be wanted of it. The question then, at its broadest can be: what did psychoanalysis want? A question that is complicated by the contradictoriness of the object psychoanalysis–who, or what, was psychoanalysis, and who spoke in its name?

'Will It Not Be Better'?

In 1921, Girindrasekhar Bose, a Calcutta doctor and lecturer in "psychoanalysis and abnormal psychology" at the University of Calcutta, wrote to

24. Freud, "Moses and Monotheism," *SE* 23:33.
25. Freud, "Moses and Monotheism," *SE* 23:63. All of these qualities are attributed by Freud to the first Moses, a man who was so demanding and ruthless as a leader that he was killed by his followers–yet the one who was the proponent of an idea of living truth and justice (Ma'at) that survived him. Ambivalence, it seems, is always to be found associated with ethical ideals.
26. See Edmundson, *The Death of Sigmund Freud.*
27. Moustapha Safouan, *Jacques Lacan and the Question of Psychoanalytic Training*, trans. Jacqueline Rose (London: Macmillan, 2000), 62-63.

Ernest Jones.[28] He asked about the International Psychological [sic] Association, about which he'd heard from Freud—its conditions of membership, and whether a branch could be established in Calcutta.[29] In his reply, Jones wrote: "the conditions to any given local society becoming affiliated to the International Society depends on my having reason to think that it contains members doing serious work along psycho-analytical lines. If you are able to start such a society in Calcutta (and may I suggest that you use the title Indian rather than Calcutta) I shall be extremely interested to hear of its progress."[30]

It did not take long for Jones to find reason to think that 'serious work along psycho-analytical lines' was being carried out. Within seven months the *Indian* Psychoanalytical Society was in existence. The group of men who formed the first cohort of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society were Calcutta intellectuals, with the exception of the English members of the Indian Medical Service. Or, as Shruti Kapila writes: "psychology in India owed much to Calcutta, the 'undisputed centre of national science'."[31] Indeed the 'Preface' to Girindrasekhar Bose's *Svapna* thanks, amongst others, his brother Rajshekhar Basu, reknowned as a writer of satire under the pen name 'Parshuram' and Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray, the author of *The History of Hindu Chemistry*.[32] M.N. Banerji, the first secretary of the society, was also Bose's publishing agent. That the Calcutta Society drew its members from a small, influential section of the people who lived in Calcutta may be an obvious point, but it becomes more significant given Jones's suggestion that the Society be called the 'Indian' rather than the 'Calcutta' society.

---

28. See Devajyoti Das, *Girindrasekhara Vasu* for a biography of Bose (Calcutta: Vangiya Sahitya Parisat, 1971). This is Bose's designation as stated on the frontispiece of his book, *The Concept of Repression*, from the 1921 edition quoted by Das.

29. Bose's letter refers to the 'International Psychological Association', Jones writes back about the International
Psychoanalytic Association. Girindrasekhar Bose, *Girindrasekhar Bose to Ernest Jones, 15 July 1921*. Letter, P04/C/B/10, Correspondence, Ernest Jones Collection, British Psychoanalytical Society [BPS], London.

30. Ernest Jones, *Ernest Jones to Girindrasekhar Bose, 9 August 1921.* Letter, P04/C/B/10, Correspondence, Ernest Jones Collection, BPS.

31. Shruti Kapila, "The 'Godless' Freud and his Indian Friends: An Indian Agenda for Psychoanalysis" in *Psychiatry and Empire* ed. Sloan Mahone and Megan Vaughan (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 126.

32. Rajshekhar Basu had also been instrumental in compiling *Calantika,* a Bengali dictionary. See Benjamin Zachariah, "The Chemistry of a Bengali Life" in *Beyond Representation: Colonial and Postcolonial Constructions of Indian Identity* ed. Crispin Bates (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 322 – 352.

Calcutta indicated a city, a geographical location, but it also served to mark a particular place in empire, and in the time of the nation.[33] Calcutta was a metropolis, in contrast to provinces understood as backward, and it remains a question who the Calcutta psychoanalysts saw themselves as closer to – psychoanalysts practicing in Europe, or the inhabitants of the backward provinces of India. In a move that was the reverse of metonymy, through Jones' suggestion to Bose, the whole that was still being imagined (as well as administered, annexed and taxed) into existence – India – was made to stand in for a part, Calcutta. The expansive title of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society was spread like a mantle across those who had begun by identifying themselves with a city, Calcutta.

After the Indian Psychoanalytical Society was established, the following remark by Girindrasekhar Bose was included in a report published in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis:*

> in India psycho-analytical investigations were likely to yield very fruitful results both from the scientific and therapeutic standpoints. The mental cases practically went untreated and the immense variety of social and religious customs, some of them of extremely ancient origin and others comparatively recent with the people existing in different grades of civilization from the most primitive to the most modern, offered an immense field for the psycho-analyst.[34]

It is worth remembering, as the historian Bodhisattva Kar points out, that in 1905 during the nationalist agitation in Bengal, "the spite of the Bengali nationalist press was often directed more to the savage Assamese neighbours than to the civilized British masters."[35] In a book published in 1945, forty years after the agitation, Bose, discussing the 'murder instinct', would write: "[i]n the child or in the savage its manifestations are more or less open. The child takes delight in killing birds and insects and the savage goes out for head hunting merely for the pleasure of

33. See Bodhisattva Kar "Can the Postcolonial Begin? Deprovincializing Assam" in Saurabh Dube ed., *Handbook of Modernity in South Asia: Modern Makeovers* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011), 43-58.
34. "History of the Indian Psycho-Analytical Society" *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 4, (Jan- Apr, 1923): 250, n.a.
35. Kar, "Deprovincializing Assam", 45.

it."[36] This comment by Bose indicates an investment in the distinction between 'savage' and 'civilised', which, as I suggest in the following chapters, was a key concern among colonial psychoanalysts. If there was something imperial in the tone of Jones's reply to Bose, then the Indian analyst seemed quite willing at times to perform what was to expected of him—if the Indian analysts were situated in a place that was thought to be prior, they could offer their world up as valuable to scientific investigation, while sharing in a teleological understanding of psychoanalysis.[37]

If we now turn to later discussions of Bose, we find that another dualism, between 'western' and 'non-western' informs much of this writing. There is an iterative quality to the terms that are used by critics to describe Girindrasekhar Bose: he is repeatedly introduced as a psychoanalyst, the first 'Indian' or 'non-western' one. Ashis Nandy calls him "the Savage Freud", while for Christiane Hartnack he is "the doyen of Indian psychoanalysis."[38] The term 'Indian' is used uncomplicatedly, often in opposition to some idea of the 'western'. Christiane Hartnack's book *Psychoanalysis in Colonial India* is divided into two parts: "British Psychoanalysts in Colonial India" and, "The Work of Indian Psychoanalysts". Bose is categorized as an 'Indian' psychoanalyst. When the Indian Psychoanalytical Society was affiliated to the International Association, Bose was still a member of the British Psychoanalytical Society.[39] The Indian Psychoanalytical Society did not distinguish, in its categories of membership, between British and Indian. The British psychoanalysts discussed by Hartnack all belonged to the Indian Psychoanalytical

36. Girindrasekhar Bose, *Everyday Psycho-Analysis* (Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1945), 27. For an account of how 'head hunting' was constituted as an object of enquiry and administration see Bodhisattva Kar, "Heads in the Naga Hills" in *New Cultural Histories of India: Materiality and Practices* ed. by Partha Chatterjee, Tapati Guha-Thakurta and Bodhisattva Kar (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 333-369. The life of the savage in the work of psychoanalysis and anthropology is the focus of Chapter 4 ' Heads and Dreams' in this dissertation.

37. Jones' own relationship to 'England' or 'English', which he spoke in the name of, may be read against his Welsh background. His biographer writes of his time at school: "[t]here Jones met English boarders who spoke with correct received pronunciation. For the first time he became aware that he had a Welsh accent - and a working class accent at that - and strove to eradicate it." Brenda Maddox, *Freud's Wizard: The Enigma of Ernest Jones* (London: John Murray, 2006), 13.

38. See Ashis Nandy, "The Savage Freud: The First Non-Western Psychoanalyst and the Politics of Secret Selves in Colonial India" in *The Savage Freud and Other Essays on Possible and Retrievable Selves* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995) 81-145; Christiane Hartnack, *Psychoanalysis in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Oxford, 2001), 94. See also Kalpana Seshadhari Crooks refers to Bose as the "first Indian Freudian" and "the only non-western analyst of note" in "The Primitive as Analyst: Postcolonial feminism's access to Psychoanalysis" *Cultural Critique* 28, (Autumn, 1994):183.

39. Girindrasekhar Bose, *Girindrasekhar Bose to Ernest Jones, 30 March 1922*. Letter, P04/C/B/10, Correspondence, Ernest Jones Collection, BPS.

Society. If Hartnack's distinctions are based, then, on nationality or ethnicity, then surely these should be questions rather than pre-given categories?

Hartnack's distinction serves, in her argument, to mark the consequences in psychoanalytical work of the differences in nationality/ethnicity of the members. In assuming these categories to have been already constituted and available to the people she writes about, her book obfuscates questions of self-representation and identification which are particularly important to psychoanalysis if it is to be understood as a theory of mental representations (and their undoing). This move requires the elision of the similarity in the questions that interested the various psychoanalysts working at the time, and the conceptual categories they used: we have already noted how Bose subscribed to the binary opposition between primitive and civilised. In this attempt at strict separation between Indian and western psychoanalysis, it is as though entire parts of Bose's work are being absorbed into the trope of resistance to Western knowledge.[40] In making this separation, Hartnack, perhaps unwittingly, comes close to sounding like Ernest Jones, writing to Bose in 1922: "[w]ill it not be better for you to transfer your allegiance from the British to the Indian group, as one cannot belong to more than one at a time."[41]

Ashis Nandy does note that "provocative and arrogant psychoanalytic summary trials of the Indian culture and personality" were put forward as much by Indian analysts as they were by analysts of British origin affiliated to the Indian Psychoanalytical Society.[42] However, it is as though the resistance to a dominant western knowledge which Nandy cannot find explicitly articulated in Bose's writing has to be recuperated from elsewhere. Thus Nandy argues that Bose's "disembedding the discipline [psychoanalysis] from its cultural moorings in the West to relocate it in Indian high culture and in the bicultural lifestyle of the urban middle classes in colonial India" was a form of "unintended dissent"– and that this 'unintended dissent,' though "partial" due to Bose's cultural position, was responsible for his

40. Christiane Hartnack writes: "Since their own culture was not worth much in colonial circles, it had to be elevated and demonstrated to be at least equal to, if not better than, the imposed colonial one. Thus, in a way, the colonial conditions nourished intellectual resistance to Western theories, and the challenge of juxtaposing indigenous cultural elements and Western imports encouraged productivity." *Psychoanalysis in Colonial India,* 121.
41. Ernest Jones, *Ernest Jones to Girindrasekhar Bose, 8 May 1922*. Letter, P04/C/B/10, Correspondence, Ernest Jones Collection, BPS.
42. Nandy, "Savage Freud", 101.

"intellectual robustness".[43] Given Bose's comment on the head hunting savage, and his categorization of people into 'different grades of civilization' it is well worth asking at this point *which* 'savage' the title of Nandy's essay: "The Savage Freud: The First Non-Western Psychoanalyst and the Politics of Secret Selves in Colonial India"–refers to.

Benjamin Zachariah, in his biographical essay on Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray, writes that "if we search in writings of Ray, or of many Bengali buddhijibi, for a confident, clearly articulated view of who they were, how they stood in relation to the 'nation' or to other potential loyalties, we might be missing the very ambiguity that truly illustrates our problem."[44] It is as though commentaries on Bose's work are working on the assumption that it could be better—*will it not be better*—if the work was less ambiguous, if there was an unambivalent critique of colonialism to be found in it. I suggest that the desire to fit members of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society into the frame of anti-colonial protest is the twin of the stereotyping, reductive ways in which the colonial administration produced information about its 'native' subjects. In both cases, contradiction is excised, and the self rendered flat—denied its inner argument and division.

Jones' 'will it not be better for you' is one person making a suggestion to another, yet the suggestion is made through phrasing that suggests that the speaker not only knows the other person's best interests, but also has them at heart. In an interaction with another person, such an authoritative claim to knowledge of the other's interest can be met with a response, even if the response is structured by imbalances of power and unequal access to language. However, if such an utterance is made towards a text or historical material, it becomes remarkably easy, in the absence of a response, to shape the material to one's will. In this case, to emphasise those parts of Bose's work that are easier to align to the idea of a native resistance to western knowledge, and to suppress those that may challenge this construct.

---

43. Nandy, "Savage Freud", 131. Later in the essay, Nandy argues that Bose "unwittingly-probably against himself-owned up this dual responsibility of the Indian psychoanalyst – the dual responsibility of being self critical at two levels by de-mystifying both 'Indian culture' and 'the proxy-West, constituted by the interlocking cultures of the colonial state and westernized middle-class Indians." "Savage Freud", 140.

44. Zachariah, "Chemistry of a Hindu Life" 345. 'Buddhijibi' may be translated here as 'intellectuals'.

'Your Far Off Country'

Bose had the honour of being the President of Indian Psychoanalytical Society, and one of the editors of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, but his work never received engaged criticism. On receiving a copy of Girindrasekhar Bose's first book, *Concept of Repression,* Freud wrote that he was "glad to testify to the correctness of its principal views and the good sense appearing in it" but in both his letter to Bose and the blurb he wrote for the publisher, what stands out is his surprise at *where* the book came from: "[m]y surprise was great that psychoanalysis should have met with so much interest and recognition in your far off country" and again, "[i]t was a great and pleasant surprise that the first book on a psychoanalytic subject which came to us from that part of the world (India) should display so good a knowledge of psychoanalysis".[45] A decade later, Freud wrote to Bose again, expressing his regrets for not having paid attention to Bose's work earlier: "I suspect your theory of opposing wishes is practically unknown among us and never mentioned or discussed."[46] Bose's location in India functioned in such a way that the *place* in which the writing was produced served as the master sign under which all his work was positioned, and for different reasons served to obscure it both in the international psychoanalytic community to which Bose tangentially belonged, and in appraisals of him by postcolonial scholars. It is as though both these forms of interest in Bose avoid inhabiting the difficulty of assimilating his work: first to psychoanalysis, and then to anti-colonial politics.

Moustapha Safouan writes that psychoanalysis, threatened by the institutional and personal attacks on it during the ascendancy of Nazism, created a hierarchical and bureaucratic structure as a defence—a bureaucracy, Safouan writes, only too comfortable in the way it took on the metaphors of colonial administration. He describes how The International Psychoanalytic Association grants recognition to regional organisations which are "responsible for the recognition of new societies and training facilities in [their] 'geographical area'. These societies are defined as

45. Sigmund Freud to Girindrasekhar Bose, 20 February 1922, in *The Beginnings of Psychoanalysis in India* (Calcutta: The Indian Psychoanalytical Society, 1999), 7.
46. Sigmund Freud to Girindrasekhar Bose, 1 January 1933*,* 7.

affiliate societies, but are not directly recognised by the IPA. Which means that the 'geographical area' constitutes a 'game preserve' of the regional association."[47]

Writing to Freud in 1912, Ernest Jones mentions the papers contributed by Freud and Jung to a congress in Australia. He says, rather jubilantly, "[t]here now remains only Brazil, China and Greenland to be penetrated. Still I do think with all the opposition that we shall suffer like Alexander for want of worlds to conquer."[48] Implicit here is the idea that psychoanalysis, once it had established itself, would stay in place. His use of the pronoun 'we' suggests Jones is speaking for both Freud and himself (Jones signs off in the letter, "yours ever always"), or speaking perhaps in the name of psychoanalysis. Either way, Jones seems untroubled by the image of greedy imperial expansion that he conjures. Yet, in his enthusiasm for *conquering,* Jones seems to have forgotten the trials faced in the governance of large empires, and the combination of brutality and neglect required to keep them together, something all too apparent in the way in which the history of psychoanalysis in India speaks to British colonial practices.

While Jones et al may have intended their references to geographical conquest as metaphors for psychoanalytic expansion, in the following chapters we will have the opportunity to note that border demarcation and actual armed conquest was an all too real part of the context in which psychoanalysis was practiced and received in India. Not only did it shape how colonial anthropologists in the North Eastern Frontier of India imagined the 'primitive', it also appears in the 'native' dreams that these anthropologists set out to collect. In the diaries of Claud Daly, a military man posted in the North West Frontier Province and Balochistan, who later trained to be an analyst, fantasies of psychoanalysis as imperial conquest are soldered to the practice of leading armed raids against the Pathan tribes who resisted British authority.

Girindrasekhar Bose was a psychoanalyst who had never been through an analysis himself. He was also the training analyst for most of the analysts who came to be affiliated to the Indian Psychoanalytical Society. It would seem that Bose had been accepted as analyst on the basis of his theoretical work (even though, as we

47. Moustapha Safouan, *Psychoanalytic Training,* 69. Jacqueline Rose notes in her Introduction to the book that in the Constitutions and Bye Laws of the IPA, "for the purposes of administering this Article (1996), 'Australia, Israel and India are *allocated to* Europe" [emphasis added], 38.
48. Ernest Jones to Sigmund Freud, 10 May 1912, in *The Complete Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Ernest Jones 1908-1939* ed. R. Andrew Paskauskas (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 141-142. Henceforth referred to as *Freud Jones Correspondence.*

have seen, this work was never seriously engaged with) as well as the geopolitics which placed him far away from Europe, in a place which both seemed desirable to include in the official psychoanalytic network, but also far away enough for analytic and institutional irregularities to be ignored. A later exchange between Jones and M.N. Banerji, Secretary of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society, makes clear where the 'centre' of psychoanalysis was understood to be. If analytic training was to be conducted properly in India, then according to Jones, "[w]hat is more urgently needed in India beyond all doubt is that any one of you, provided he has the necessary gifts, should proceed to Europe for full training. You would then be able to better judge of the differences in standard and technique than is now possible with the relative isolation from which you suffer."[49]

Jones' remark flags a contradiction. It was this 'relative isolation' that kept the Indian Psychoanaltyical Society from meeting the 'standards' of psychoanalysis in Europe:

> I very fully appreciate all that you say about the variation of standards in your Society. All that you say has, I think, held and to some extent still holds, of other Societies.[...] On the other hand, the Societies more favourably situated than yours have had the opportunity of raising their standards very considerably and are intent on still doing so. The fact that there have been all the difficulties you mention in the past must not deter us in this respect, or prevent us from pushing on in the future.[50]

At the same time, this very isolation made the IPS a valuable outpost for a psychoanalysis that imagined itself as *pushing on in the future*. Jonathan Lear writes that having 'standards' may be a way of avoiding the difficult question of how a profession may conduct itself: "because the standards present themselves as having already answered the question"—but what is of interest here is also how Jones' professional standards seem to merge with the standards that nations hoist.[51] In the raising of standards (or marching under them) psychoanalytic insights about how

49. Ernest Jones, *Ernest Jones to M.N. Banerji, 23 December 1936*. Letter, P04/C/B/10, Correspondence, Ernest Jones Collection, BPS.
50. Ernest Jones, *Ernest Jones to M.N. Banerji, 23 December 1936*. Letter, P04/C/B/10, Correspondence, Ernest Jones Collection, BPS.
51. Jonathan Lear, *Open Minded: Working Out the Logic of the Soul* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 3.

there can be no uncomplicated *pushing on in the future*, were jettisoned, as was the psychoanalytic critique of the idea that the past waits around the corner waiting to direct the steps of the future. Lear's critique of predetermined 'standards' as blocking real questioning or thought evokes the work of Wilfred Bion, a psychoanalyst who spent his childhood in colonial India, and in whose work, discussed in Chapter 3, I find a counterpoint to the imperial fantasies of colonial analysts.

The Talking Cure in the 'Tropics'

Towards the end of Freud's life, the following statement was published in an Australian newspaper :

> Professor Sigmund Freud, world-famous psychologist, who was ejected from Austria by Hitler's orders, is writing a new book. In his study in a red-brick Hampstead house, he is busily engaged, day and night, on what his friends expect will be his greatest book. Its theme is a closely guarded secret. But those in closest touch with the 82-year-old thinker believe that it will be a study of the Nazi psychology, which will provide a shattering answer to *Mein Kampf*. Hitler's mentality, it is believed, will be shown up as a conglomeration of morbid repressions and neuroses.[52]

Through a fantastic reconstruction of the time of Moses in Egypt, Freud's last book, *Moses and Monotheism* analyses the identity of the Jewish people. Writing about the history of a persecuted people, Freud allows them both a capacity for violence and the possibility of recognising the other within. Though the portrait of the 'great man' in Freud's last text, *Moses and Monotheism*, can be read as being shadowed by Hitler, at a time when it would have seemed most legitimate and indeed obvious to analyse the persecuting other, Freud chose to look at himself as a Jew as much at what was going on around him. The text involves itself in the question of what it means to live a history, and can be read as a form of psychoanalytic reflection that was a way of taking responsibility within the

52. *'Reply to Mein Kampf' in Daily Clarion, Sydney, 24 December 1938*. Press Cuttings, Sigmund Freud Archive, Freud Museum, London.

threatening confines of a historical moment. Here, as in many of his previous works, Freud concerns himself with our desire for, and use of history: "[l]ong-past ages have a great and often puzzling attraction for men's imagination. Whenever they are dissatisfied with their present surroundings- and this happens often enough—they turn back to the past and hope that they will now be able to prove the truth of the unextinguishable dream of a golden age".[53] Both H.D. and Freud were interested in the question of the past—the shards and statuettes of past civilizations, their myths and religions. Their return to history was not to find a 'golden age' but to place a question over what was understood as the past—whether as the safe bedrock of tradition to which civilisation referred itself, or as a dangerous primitivity that had been long left behind.

We have seen how tropes of conquest circulated amongst practitioners of psychoanalysis. Writing to Bose in 1931, Freud would say "[t]he statuette is charming. I gave it the place of honour on my desk. As long as I can enjoy life it will recall to my mind the progress of psychoanalysis, the proud conquest it has made in foreign countries, and the kind feelings for me it has aroused in some of my contemporaries at least."[54] In explicit tension with these expansionist fantasies is the way in which Freud's writing in this last work gives identity the gift of being constituted by the stranger. In *Moses and Monotheism*, the origins of monotheism are referred back in time, and away from Europe–Moses is an Egyptian taking forward an Egyptian religion, which itself came from outside Egypt: "it is possible that direct incitements to monotheism even made their way in from Syria."[55] The founding of an identity, in this account, can only refer itself to an other which refers to an other in turn.

This is a narrative of identity dismantling itself even as it tries to learn its own contours, but Freud is alert and unsparing in his account of how this very instability may feed a desire for violent consolidation, and that the relation to the strangers and others who constitute an identity is, at the very least, ambivalent.[56] It is

53. Freud, "Moses and Monotheism," *SE* 23:71.
54. Sigmund Freud to Girindrasekhar Bose, 13th December 1931, *The Beginnings of Psychoanalysis in India: Bose Freud Correspondence*, 21.
55.Freud, "Moses and Monotheism," *SE* 23:21-22.
56. For a discussion of Freud's conceptualisation of identity in *Moses and Monotheism* see Edward W. Said, *Freud and the Non-European*, with an Introduction by Christopher Bollas and a response by Jacqueline Rose (London: Verso, 2003).

a central contention of this thesis that *both* strands are woven together in the manner in which psychoanalysis presents itself in India. Like H.D. with the statuette, psychoanalysis in India seems both compelled and repelled by its strangers, whether city-dwelling Indians, primitive tribes, or criminals. Psychoanalysis theorises the ambivalences that it also enacts. The encounter between psychoanalysis and India suggests that this ambivalence demands neither excision, nor resolution as many of the figures discussed here attempt, but a reckoning with both internal and social divisions, the complexities of the mind, and the deposits of history.

Already in this introductory discussion we have come across the key themes that accompany my account of the history of psychoanalysis in India. The distinction between European and non-European, provincial and metropolitan that accompanies so much of the institutional history of psychoanalysis, was, in India, organised around the binary of 'primitive' and 'civilised'. The historical narratives that follow are a testament to the powerful allegiances called forth by the idea of 'civilisation' and the extent to which its adherents would go to defend and further it. The 'primitive', in the meantime, was produced as an 'other': the object of intense epistemological curiosity, the site of a persistent nostalgia for a wild past, and the recipient of state sanctioned violence. In this dissertation, psychoanalysis is the object of historical investigation, and part of my task has been to offer an hitherto untold account of various engagements with psychoanalysis in colonial India. Psychoanalytic writing by Freud is also the topic of literary inquiry into how it engages with, and is inflected by, colonialism. In addition to this, in the chapters that follow, psychoanalysis is a means of interpreting and reading key texts. I have found it productive to draw upon psychoanalysis in more than one capacity, as the questions I address in thesis are the result of its being both the object of study and a form of reading and interpretation.

In the first chapter, I offer a reading of Freud's work refracted through key questions posed by the history of psychoanalysis in India. In the Introduction to *the Psychoanalysis of Race*, Christopher Lane writes: "[h]owever tarnished the origins of psychoanalysis now seem to us by their interest in the 'savage' and 'primitive,' to assume that this material's recovery releases the unconscious from inquiry is, I think,

a grave mistake."[57] I agree, and would add that an interest in the question of the 'savage' and 'primitive' is in itself no cause for arraignment, and even when the use of these terms carries a negative judgement, engaging with their deployment can be revealing, as the essays in Lane's volume suggest.[58] In this dissertation, I have found it revealing to return to Freud's account of both civilisation and the figure of the 'primitive'.

In Freud's writing, I suggest, 'civilisation' is imbued with a fundamental ambivalence, which makes it incommensurable with the colonial invocation of it as goal and ideal. Similarly the 'primitive' becomes Freud's way of negotiating complex questions about death, temporality, and ambivalence, through which Freud can be said to elaborate an ethics of psychoanalysis. As I mentioned earlier in the context of the tension between psychoanalytical theory and the psychoanalytical institution, through his account of the superego, Freud posited a radical critique of authority. In addition to discussing Freud's theorisation of the superego in the first chapter, I also read his writing on group psychology as an exploration of the seductions and perils of authority. Sexuality, and Freud's discussion of it as a challenge to both identity and mastery, is another aspect of Freud's work taken up in this chapter and, along with his writing on civilisation, the 'primitive', and groups, is read here as an aspect of his thinking that blocks its appropriation for colonial ends.

The following chapters present the historical material that has given shape to this reading of Freud. In the second chapter, I discuss the work of two analysts who tried to square their interest in psychoanalysis with their allegiance to colonial endeavours. For Lt. Col. Claud Daly of the Supply and Transport Corps, this meant seeing psychoanalysis as identical to civilisation, though as we shall see, both his dream diaries and his published psychoanalytical writing attest to the difficulties of such an attempt. His work is read alongside the autobiographical writing of Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill, the Superintendent of the Ranchi European Mental Hospital. Writing by these two analysts is involved in questions of race and empire, and it is possible to read it as an attempt to fashion a masculine, masterful colonial persona, one that would be capable of being in possession of itself while controlling, even

57. Christopher Lane "Introduction" to *The Psychoanalysis of Race* ed. Christopher Lane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 13.
58. See for example Slavoj Zizek, "Love Thy Neighbour? No Thanks!"; Jacqueline Rose, "Wulf Sach's *Black Hamlet*"; David Marriott, "Bonding Over Phobia" in *The Psychoanalysis of Race*. 154-175; 333-352; 417-430.

subjugating others, be they women, servants or entire native populations. It is key to my argument in this chapter, and in the entire thesis, that such attempts as mastery fail. In writing by these colonial analysts, what is found undesirable and intolerable about the self makes a return, undoing the image they try to construct of themselves.

The consequences of such attempts at mastery are described by the psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion, in his autobiographies and theoretical work, which are the subject of Chapter 3. Bion spent his childhood in British India, and I find in his writing a powerful anti-colonial strain. Not only does Bion's writing offer a mode of thinking and remembering the colony that is the obverse of Daly and Berkeley Hill's writing, his theoretical work on the processes of thinking and groups also offers insights into the historical narrative discussed in the other chapters. Bion and Freud's thinking on group identity has allowed me to think of national, racial and religious affiliations as forms of group identification that can be both fleeting and unyieldingly rigid. This is a crucial contradiction and one which I think the psychoanalytic thinking on groups is particularly capable of taking on board. As the thesis discusses a time when the political situation was witness to the formation and consolidation of many group affiliations, the alertness of psychoanalysis to the complexities of such identifications is helpful in acknowledging that national, religious or colonial allegiances are neither eternal nor inevitable.

In the fourth chapter, I return to the theme of colonial mastery, in relation to the practice of anthropology in the province of Assam, particularly the Naga and Garo Hills regions. Anthropological practitioners who were also colonial officials quilted together administrative imperatives and the enterprise of collecting and cataloguing the 'primitive', notably in their response to 'head-hunting'. Once again, as in the case of Daly and Berkeley Hill, we find that what they tried to excise from their 'civilised' selves made a return in their writing, and the form that their administrative measures took. Yet this history is also a reminder that a failure of mastery, a dissolution of a cherished self-image can call forth unrestrained aggression. Colonial responses to head-hunting return us to the problem of the superego, to the way in which morality and self-righteousness can sanction brutality against others seen to be threatening in their difference and no less in their proximity, in what they throw light upon in the 'civilised self'.

H.D.'s exchange with Freud, the circumstances in which the IPS was set up, and Girindrasekhar Bose's own correspondence with Freud, as well as the historical

narratives detailed in the following chapters suggest that in many ways the exchange between psychoanalysis and colonial India was a series of missed encounters. Those who expressed an interest in psychoanalysis, or claimed to speak in its name, were rarely able to use their experience of the colony to reflect on psychoanalytic thinking, and neither did their contact with psychoanalytic ideas lead them to question their place in the colonial project. One of the strange characteristics of these accounts is just how close colonial figures, as well as Indian psychoanalysts, sometimes come in their writing to a form of radical insight into their milieu and themselves, and yet are not able to articulate it. Wilfred Bion was a notable exception, and an important one in that his work is a reminder of the possibilities of insight and transformation inherent in an historical moment.

And yet it is my contention that in spite of these missed encounters, the history of psychoanalysis in India can be read to reanimate psychoanalytic questions, and in this dissertation I attempt to do this in relation to the theorisation of mastery, the problem of the superego, and the category of the primitive. The colonial context of psychoanalysis in India irrevocably involves the psyche in questions of politics. In this dissertation, this entanglement is nowhere more apparent than in the case of Gopinath Saha, a nationalist 'terrorist' whose courtroom trial is the focus of the final chapter. Girindrasekhar Bose was the expert witness in the defence's insanity plea, and his testimony places him in direct dialogue with both nationalist politics, most notably in relation to the figure of Mother India, invoked by Saha as the inspiration and cause of his actions.

In addition to psychoanalytic and historical sources, literary writing has been crucial in offering this account of psychoanalysis in India. Some of the texts I turn to, such as *Anandamath* in Chapter 5, are part of the historical milieu being discussed, and played a key role in shaping it. A short story by the anthropologist J.P. Mills, titled "Shakchi" is discussed in Chapter 4. Discovered in the course of research in the colonial archive, it troubles attempts to make a neat distinction between historical material and literary text. Other key sources, such as diaries, letters and autobiographies, and anthropological texts, all occupy a similarly indeterminate space between what would be considered the domain of the historian and the domain of the literary scholar. My strategy, in this dissertation, has been to read them, first and foremost, for the manner in which they are written. Other texts discussed in this thesis, notably Temsula Ao's short stories, Rabindranath Tagore's

Gora and Mahasweta Devi's "Breast Giver" offer themselves as a response to a dismal history. They are both in touch with some of the same difficulties, and radically distinct in their way of presenting them, from the psychoanalytic and colonial figures. They enunciate, as I will suggest in the following chapters, both a radical questioning of, and an ethical reckoning with the historical and political situations they engage with.

Though literature, in these instances, is read as an antidote to political orthodoxy and as a means of questioning rigid and exclusionary forms of identity, I hope the discussions in the following chapters will make clear that I do not attribute a redemptive quality to literature in general. Indeed, my discussions of *Anandamath* and "Shakchi" suggest that the production of literary texts can co-exist with and participate in incitements to violence. If there is a special, or rather, a particular place accorded the literary in this thesis then it is not due to any inherently redemptive or politically progressive quality to be found in it. Rather, in the context of this thesis, the relation to fantasy in the acts of reading and writing fiction, the possibility of inhabiting what would otherwise be considered impossible or mad subjectivities and temporalities, and the dramatization of the slippages of meaning inherent in language, are what endow literary texts with a distinct place in the following chapters. These characteristics are of course not unique to literary texts and as we shall see, are indeed sometimes shared with the other kinds of writing discussed in this dissertation, but they are heightened, highly developed in the literary work.

Questions of fantasy and attention to language are privileged modes of interpretation as far as literary texts are concerned. In approaching psychoanalysis through literature and literary interpretation I borrow from the work of the literary scholars Leo Bersani, Malcolm Bowie and Shoshana Felman, whose readings of Freud as a contradictory, unsettled thinker have shaped the account of his work offered in the following chapter, and helped me find a route into reading the other sources. I have found this a suggestive and rewarding way of approaching the history of psychoanalysis in India. It has helped make room for what Anne Anlin Cheng, in her urgent and evocative book *The Melancholy of Race*, calls "the immaterial, pressing, unquantifiable elements that go into the making of 'reality'".[59] Finally, Jacqueline Rose's essay "Freud in the 'Tropics'" has been a shaping influence on

[59]. Anne Anlin Cheng, *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation and Hidden Grief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 25.

this dissertation, as it first opened up for me the possibility of a reading of Freud in a colonial context that was neither an indictment, nor an exoneration, but a way of putting psychoanalysis in conversation with urgent historical and political questions.[60] The title of this dissertation is a tribute to this exemplary piece of writing.

60. Jacqueline Rose, "Freud in the 'Tropics'" in *On Not Being Able to Sleep* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2003), 125-148.

Chapter One

Freud in the Colony

The quest for paradise has always and everywhere led to the creation of hell on earth. Is there an incontrovertible law at work there? That would be worth looking into. It would also be worthwhile to consider why the belief so prevalent here—that there is a solution to every problem, a remedy for every ailment, a relief for every suffering, a cure for every sickness—creates a feeling of unreality, even uncanniness, and can easily tip over into madness.

I insisted you couldn't have one without the other—misery and grief were the lining of Dr Freud's overcoat—but Francesco wanted his joie de vivre and optimism and assertiveness pure, without the shadow of melancholy, defeat, and failure. Without the background of German history, in other words, I said.

-Christa Wolf, *City of Angels or, The Overcoat of Dr. Freud*

In the Ernest Jones papers at the Sigmund Freud Archives in the Library of Congress, Washington, in a file of newspaper clippings is an article that reads:

> A lecture was announced at Ithaca, New York State, "by an intimate friend and pupil of Freud" and it was given to a packed and brilliant audience. The friend and pupil of FREUD naturally discoursed on dreams. "A dreamer," he said, "naturally does not know what he dreams but he does not know what he knows and therefore believes what he does not know." It is a very true account of some psychology, but the audience did not recognise the kind of truth that was in it. They were not aware that the lecture was a parody. […] The Freudian psychology is both exciting and difficult to understand; it is therefore misunderstood by many people who wish for excitement. And the misunderstanding is not prevented by FREUD himself, who, though a man of genius, has also a turn for reducing his own theories to an absurdity and no great gift of lucid exposition.[61]

Facetious as the tone of the article might be, it captures something of the response that Freud's work has received over the years: both its dismissal, and the

61. Untitled newspaper clipping, Box 1, Folder 22, Ernest Jones Papers 1921-1958, Sigmund Freud Collection, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress [SFC-LC], Washington DC.

'excitement' and adherence that it has aroused. Scholarship on Freud is particularly divisive, and as Jonathan Lear has pointed out, the accusations against him often contradict each other entirely, a case in point being the debates over the seduction theory that Freud abandoned.[62]

The newspaper's typographical conventions may have led them to capitalise Freud's name in this article, but this only underscores the curious status of Freud in the history of psychoanalysis. In his essay "What is an Author" Michel Foucault describes Freud and Marx as the "founders of discursivity".[63] Freud's name and work are tied to psychoanalysis in that those working in the field return to his work and take a position on it: [t]o say that Freud founded psychoanalysis does not (simply) mean that we find the concept of the libido or the technique of dream analysis in the works of Karl Abraham or Melanie Klein; it means that Freud made possible a certain number of divergences—with respect to his own texts, concepts, and hypotheses—that all arise from the psychoanalytic discourse itself.[64] These possibilities for divergence may have something to do with the contradictions in Freud's own positions. As Jonathan Lear writes:

> [i]n one way, he is the advocate of the unconscious; in another, he is himself filled with Enlightenment optimism that the problems posed by the unconscious can be solved; in yet another, he is wary of the dark side of the human soul and pessimistic about doing much to alleviate psychological pain. He is Tiresias and Oedipus and Sophocles rolled into one.[65]

If Freud is a figure of authority, a founding father, then the contradictory, self-interrogating nature of his writing adds a dimension of indeterminacy to this authority. One cannot simply 'follow' Freud, because to do so would beg the question of which Freud it is who is being followed. Reading Freud foregrounds the

---

62. Jonathan Lear, *Open Minded: Working Out the Logic of the Soul* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1998) 19. Lear writes: "No matter what side the author is on, Freud is blamed for being on the other." Freud suppressed evidence of child abuse because he jettisoned the seduction theory, argues Jeffery Masson, while Frederick Crews accuses Freud of creating a culture where supposedly repressed memories of child sexual abuse are magnified. See also Arnold I Davidson, "Assualt on Freud," *London Review of Books* 6, no. 7 (1984), 9-11.
63. Michel Foucault, "What is an Author," in *Aesthetics, Method and Epistemology: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984 Volume II,* ed. James D. Faubion, trans. Robert Hurley et al. (London: Allen Lane, 1998), 217.
64. Foucault, "What is an Author", 218.
65. Lear, *Open Minded,* 31.

interpretative nature of an act of reading. Literary critic and queer theorist Leo Bersani, in his discussion of *Civilization and its Discontents*, draws attention to the tension between the "upper body" of Freud's texts and his footnotes: "these secondary thoughts, these afterthoughts, these bottom-of-the-page thoughts".[66] These extensive notes do much more than cite or explain—they carry out an argument with the main, upper text, sometimes elaborating theories of their own. They are a valuable reminder to the reader that Freud's thinking is often split, pulled in seemingly irreconcilable directions. This, as well as the nature of the object of psychoanalysis, the unconscious, means that psychoanalysis cannot arrive at conclusions once and for all, only producing provisional knowledge about its object in a process of ongoing interpretation. Bersani writes: "[p]sychoanalysis is an unprecedented attempt to give a theoretical account of precisely those forces which obstruct, undermine, play havoc with theoretical accounts themselves."[67] He suggests that failure is constitutive of psychoanalytical thinking, because a theory of desire cannot be dissociated from recklessly self-defeating moves in the performance of the theory.

In this thesis, psychoanalysis is not a unitary entity. It is both an historical referent and a form of analysis. I have been led to my reading of Freud by the historical material and literary texts discussed in this thesis. Freud's writing often nibbles away at his positions of mastery, and the history of psychoanalysis in India has taught me to value this contradictoriness, this possibility of interpretation and revision. This speculative openness and internal dissent presents a stark contrast to the positions of colonial epistemological authority that we will encounter in the following chapters. The historical details have allowed me, as it were, to excavate, for my purposes, a Freud whose thinking is conversation with (even if this conversation takes place at times at the edge of the text, at the limits of his awareness) with the history of colonisation. In this opening chapter, I discuss Freud's writings on the 'primitive', his tortured account of 'civilisation', his theories of sexuality and his writing on group psychology as four fundamental aspects of his work that resist appropriation for colonial ends. It is these Freudian insights that I have found indispensable in negotiating this history, in confronting its significance,

66. Leo Bersani, *The Freudian Body Psychoanalysis and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 14.
67. Bersani, *The Freudian Body,* 4.

and to which I return in the following chapters.

At the same time, in the following chapters, I will be turning to psychoanalytic concepts as a way of interpreting and approaching both historical events and literary texts. I can only do this by understanding Freud's work, not as a master discourse of interpretation, but as a form of writing which can be read for the ways in which it is inflected by colonialism, yet also critical of its impulses.[68] In many ways, Freud's texts lend themselves to such a reading because of their "defiant assumption of literarity", as the renowned Proust scholar Malcolm Bowie puts it in his discussion of *Civilization and its Discontents*.[69] He writes: "Freud remembers too much, puts too much in, for his own good as a scientist or as a moralist. In the process he rejoins another company of exceptional individuals whose business it is to elaborate and amplify beyond the needs of instrumental reason or theoretical coherence. He rejoins that special company of rememberancers, memorialists and archivists we know as artists or creative writers."[70] It is because Freud's psychoanalytic writings share something of the indeterminacy of both historical narratives (based on an incomplete archive) and literary texts (foregrounding the ambiguity of language) that I have found it possible to put the three together, to let them interpret each other.[71]

"The history of the subject" writes the literary scholar Diana Fuss in *Identification Papers*, is "one of perpetual psychical conflict and of continual change under pressure. It is a profoundly turbulent history of contradictory impulses and structural incoherencies".[72] Psychoanalysis allows for the subject of history to be conceived as divided, non-identical with itself. Or as the film theorist Joan Copjec

68. Shoshana Felman describes the perils of psychoanalysis as master interpretation: "[i]n seeking to 'explain' and master literature, in refusing, that is, to become a dupe of literature, in killing within literature that which makes it literature—its reserve of silence, that which, within speech, is incapable of speaking, the literary silence of a discourse ignorant of what it knows—the psychoanalytic reading, ironically enough, turns out to be a reading which represses the unconscious, which represses, paradoxically, the unconscious which it purports to be explaining." Shoshana Felman, "Turning the Screw of Interpretation" *Yale French Studies* 55/56, (1977): 93. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2930436.
69. Malcolm Bowie, "Memory and Desire in Freud's Civilisation and its Discontents" *New Formations* 26, (Autumn 1995): 14.
70. Bowie, "Memory and Desire," 9.
71. Carolyn Steedman writes: "[t]he Archive is not potentially made up of everything, as is human memory; and it is not the fathomless and timeless place in which nothing goes away that is the unconscious. The Archive is made from selected and consciously chosen documentation from the past and also from the mad fragmentations that no one intended to preserve and that just ended up there." Carolyn Steedman, *Dust* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 68.
72. Diana Fuss, *Identification Papers* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 49.

puts in her book *Read My Desire: Lacan Against the Historicists*, psychoanalysis questions the idea of a subject of historical investigation who exists "behind the facts" and who "has unique access to his or her own psychological intentions".[73] Instead, it posits a subject unknown to herself/himself, who acts in unexpected ways that are beyond the determinations of sociology. I have found this particularly helpful in thinking about the people and incidents discussed in the following chapters. In my attempts at putting together an account of psychoanalysis in India, I have found that colonial anthropologists, Indian psychoanalysts, and revolutionary nationalists, to mention just some of the figures who appear in this thesis, could be puzzled and taken aback by themselves, even when attempting to embody absolute authority. The traces of this puzzlement, this occasional absence from the self, are there in the material that they've left behind for the historian.

The subject may be absent from itself, but it is always involved with another: "In the individual's mental life someone else is invariable involved, as a model, as an object, as a helper, as an opponent; and so from the very first individual psychology, in this extended but entirely justifiable sense of the words, is at the same time social psychology as well", writes Freud.[74] The following chapters take up the question of the relationship to an other, which is thrown into relief by historical circumstances. Discussions of the primitive as epistemological other, the uncanny double, the neighbour, and the problem of group relations show how this question also accompanied much of Freud's writing. The newspaper clipping in Ernest Jones' file describes a confusion of voices—who spoke authentically in the name of Freud? We've noted that Freud did not speak in a unitary voice. Jacqueline Rose, in her essay "Mass Psychology" describes how Freud, in his "A Note on Anti Semitism" quotes extensively from an article about whose source he is unclear, and which may have been written by Freud himself, then attributed to a non-Jew, and subsequently quoted by the author himself. "But whether these are Freud's words or not," Rose writes, "the effect is the same. Either way, by copiously citing or by inventing, the distinction breaks down, the two fuse. As they must if race hatred is ever to end, Jew

73. Joan Copjec, "The Sartorial Superego," in *Read my Desire: Lacan against the Historicists* (London: Verso 2015), 66.
74. Sigmund Freud "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego," *SE* 18:69.

and non Jew speak with one voice, cross over to the other's place."[75]

A Question of Translation, a Matter of Construction*

Less than two months after Freud's death, the analyst Hanns Sachs wrote to Ernest Jones to "applaud the decision" that "a complete, uniform and faultless edition of Freud's works would be the best memorial".[76] Writing about the difficulty in finding specific passages in Freud's published works (which did not have an index), Sachs was of the opinion that "a complete collection of all Freud's work, the small articles included, uniform not only outwardly but also in the style of translation and the use of terminology (in the widest sense) is certainly an indispensable necessity."[77] There exists already a considerable body of work that addresses the question of the difficulties in translating Freud, and the merits and inadequacies of *The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud.* [78] This, along with our discussions of Freud as a contradictory thinker only underscores the difficulties in way of preparation of a 'uniform and faultless' edition. The desire for consistency, to create a fitting memorial to Freud, takes us back to Moustapha Safouan's suggestion, which I discuss in the Introduction to this thesis, that the way in which psychoanalysis institutionalized itself was a response to the ambivalence towards its founding father.

The translation project was not without its own imperial and racial assumptions. When it was first envisaged, the attractiveness of a *Standard Edition* in English, over any other language, was linked to its status as the language of Empire: in his letter Sachs suggests that there would be many people in the 'British Empire' willing to take out a subscription to the *Standard Edition*. Another analyst, Franz Alexander, in a letter responding to Jones' suggestion of a *Standard Edition*,

---

75. Jacqueline Rose*, The Last Resistance* (London: Verso, 2017), 233.

* In this section, I have provided translations from the *Standard Edition* in square brackets when quoting from the German, and translations from the *Gesammelte Werke* when quoting the English translation. All other translations are identified with a note.

76. Hanns Sachs. *Hanns Sachs to Ernest Jones, 6 November 1939*. Letter, Box 1, Folder 24, Ernest Jones Papers 1921-1958, SFC-LC.

77. Hanns Sachs. *Hanns Sachs to Ernest Jones, 6 November 1939*. Letter, Box 1, Folder 24, Ernest Jones Papers 1921-1958, SFC-LC.

78. See for example, Bettelheim, *Freud and Man's Soul* (London: Pimlico, 2001); Mark Solms, "Controversies in Freud Translation" *Psychoanalysis and History* 1, no. 1 (1999) 28-43; Ricardo Steiner "A World Wide International Trademark of Genuineness? Some Observations on the history of the English translation of the Work of Sigmund Freud, Focusing mainly on his technical terms" *The International Review of Psychoanalysis* 14 (1987) 33-102.

described it as the "monumental" edition, distinguishing it from the "popular dollar edition" of Freud's *Collected Papers*.[79] "The other day a colored Pullman porter," Alexander wrote to Jones, "who somehow learned that I was a psychiatrist, began a conversation with me about Freud", suggesting that the consumers of the two editions were likely to be entirely different sets of people.[80] Yet issues of race and imperialism are also internal to the translations in the *Standard Edition* and have significant consequences for how a reader encountering Freud in English interprets his discussion of the 'primitive'.

Freud does not have a stable term with which he refers to 'primitives', rather, he uses a variety of words and phrases. Nowhere is this heterogeneity more on display than in *Totem and Taboo* [1913]. The phrases Freud uses here include 'den Menschen der Vorzeit' (people of a former time), 'Naturvölker' (people in a state of nature), 'Wilden' (wild, savage) and 'Primitiven' (primitive).[81] Freud's text is subtitled: "Einige Ubereinstimmungen Seelenleben der Wilden und der Neurotiker" ["Some Points of Agreement Between the Mental Life of Savages and Neurotics"]. On the opening page, he writes that the "'Psychologie der Naturvölker'" (in quotes in the original) can be compared to the "Psychologie des Neurotikers". The term 'Naturvölker' carries within it the history of being used as a philosophical construct. 'Naturvölker' (translated into English in the *Standard Edition* as "primitive peoples", with no accompanying quotes) is a term that carries the resonances of the Enlightenment, when it was deployed in the philosophy of the time to indicate people in a 'state of nature'. There is an indeterminacy in the text of *Totem and Taboo*: are neurotics compared to 'Wilden'—present day contemporary 'savages', or to 'Naturvölker', to the *idea* of people in a state of nature? The translation resolves the issue in favour of the former interpretation: 'primitive peoples' in English suggests actual people rather than a philosophical concept.

Using separate terms for "prehistoric man" [den Menschen der Vorzeit] and "savages" [Wilden] in *Totem and Taboo* allows Freud to introduce a distinction between the contemporary 'savage' and the ancestors of man, who belong to an older

79. Franz Alexander, *Franz Alexander to Ernest Jones, 16 November 1939*. Letter, Box 1, Folder 24, Ernest Jones Papers 1921-1958, SFC-LC.
80. Franz Alexander, *Franz Alexander to Ernest Jones, 16 November 1939*. Letter, Box 1, Folder 24, Ernest Jones Papers 1921-1958, SFC-LC.
81. [Translations mine.]

past.[82] It is this distinction that is lost in the English translation of *Civilisation and its Discontents* [1930]:

> Der *Urmensch* hatte es in der Tat darin besser, da er keine Triebeinschränkungen kannte. Zum Ausgleich war seine Sicherheit, solches Glück lange zu genießen, eine sehr geringe. Der *Kulturmensch* hat für ein Stück Glücksmöglichkeit ein Stück Sicherheit eingetauscht. Wir wollen aber nicht vergessen, daß in der *Urfamilie* nur das Oberhaupt sich solcher Triebfreiheit erfreute; die anderen lebten in sklavischer Unterdrückung. Der Gegensatz zwischen einer die Vorteile der Kultur genießenden Minderheit und einer dieser Vorteile beraubten Mehrzahl war also in jener *Urzeit der Kultur* aufs Äußerste getrieben. Über *den heute lebenden Primitiven* haben wir durch sorgfältigere Erkundung erfahren, daß sein Triebleben keineswegs ob seiner Freiheit beneidet werden darf; es unterliegt Einschränkungen von anderer Art, aber vielleicht von größerer Strenge als das des modernen Kulturmenschen.[83]
>
> [In fact, *primitive man* was better off in knowing no restrictions of instinct. To counterbalance this, his prospects of enjoying this happiness for any length of time were very slender. *Civilized man* has exchanged a portion of his possibilities of happiness for a portion of security. We must not forget, however, that in the *primal family* only the head of it enjoyed this instinctual freedom; the rest lived in slavish suppression. In that *primal period of civilization*, the contrast between a minority who enjoyed the advantages of civilization and a majority who were robbed of those advantages was, therefore, carried to extremes. As regards *the primitive peoples who exist to-day*, careful researches have shown that their instinctual life is by no means to be envied for its freedom. It is subject to restrictions of a different kind but perhaps of greater severity than those attaching to modern civilized man.][84]

Here, both 'Urmench' and 'heute lebenden Primitiven' are translated as 'primitive man' and 'primitive peoples' respectively, even though Freud makes a conceptual distinction between the fantasised primitive ancestor of human pre-

82. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 13:1; "Totem und Tabu," *GW* 9:5. 'Den Menschen der Vorzeit' can be translated simply as people of former times.
83. Sigmund Freud, "Das Unbehagen in der Kultur," *GW* 14:474-475. [Italics added.]
84. Freud, "Civilisation and its Discontents," *SE* 21:52. [Italics added.]

history, the 'Urmensch', and the 'primitives' of today— 'den heute lebenden Primitiven'. This distinction is clearly marked in the text by the separate words used, yet the translation does not reflect this, even though other words prefixed with 'Ur' in this paragraph: 'Urfamilie' and 'Urzeit', are both translated as 'primal family' and 'primal times'.

The translation of 'Kultur' in the "Das Unbehagen in der Kultur" as 'Civilisation' also has implications for the question of how Freud conceptualised the distinction between primitive and civilised. An editorial note to *The Future of an Illusion* [1927] justifies this translation: "it seems unnecessary to embark on the tiresome problem of the proper translation of the German word '*Kultur*'", by quoting Freud's remark from the text that he did not make a distinction between 'culture' and 'civilisation'.[85] Freud wrote: "Human civilization, by which I mean all those respects in which human life has raised itself above its animal status and differs from the life of beasts—and I scorn to distinguish between culture and civilization […]".[86] The sociologist Norbert Elias, in his magisterial work *The Civilizing Process,* describes how 'Zivilsation' and 'Kultur' were antithetical words in a German context. The former indicated "superficiality, ceremony, formal conversation", the latter "inwardness, depth of feeling, immersion in books, development of the individual personality".[87] In the French and English uses of the word, Elias argues, the concept of 'civilisation' "sums up in a single term their pride in the significance of their own nations for the progress of the West and of humankind" while in German 'Zivilisation' indicates "something that is indeed useful, but nevertheless only a value of the second rank".[88] When Freud dismisses the distinction between 'Kultur' and 'Zivilisation' in German, he is jettisoning a separation between surface and depth, not endorsing 'civilisation' as it is used in English.

Raymond Williams describes how 'civilisation' came to be associated with "modern social process"—both its achievements and ills. In English, the word

85. Stratchey wrote: "We have usually, but not invariably, chosen 'civilization' for the noun and 'cultural' for the adjective." James Strachey, "Editor's Note" to "The Future of an Illusion," *SE* 21:4.
86. Sigmund Freud, "The Future of an Illusion," *SE* 21:5-6. ["Die menschliche Kultur — ich meine all das, worin sich das menschliche Leben über seine animalischen Bedingungen erhoben hat und worin es sich vom Leben der Tiere unterscheidet — und ich verschmähe es, Kultur und Zivilisation zu trennen — zeigt dem Beobachter bekanntlich zwei Seiten."] "Die Zukunft einer Illusion," *GW* 14:326.
87. Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2016), 18.
88. Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 6.

carries strong resonances of "an achieved condition of refinement and order", often opposed to the state of barbarism—and is a word that till this day carries a normative charge.[89] In nineteenth century German works on the topic, 'Kultur' included plural modes of organising society, a concept that was taken up in ethnology and anthropology. In English language works, 'culture' since the mid nineteenth-century denoted "distinct ways of life, which need to be studied as wholes."[90] Some of the questions that "Das Unbehagen in der Kultur" raises, such as man's relationship to modern technology, may seem specific to societies that participated in industrial and technological expansion.[91] But Freud is as concerned with problems to do with the organization of people into societies with their attendant codes and prohibitions, irrespective of their industrial development ('all those respects in which human life has raised itself above animal status'). In the English translation, the universality of Freud's question is occluded by using the word 'civilisation' because of its normative usage as well as its associations with modernity, despite Freud's insistence that 'savages' have their own elaborate institutions. The discontent [Unbehagen] that Freud attributes to man's existence in *culture* includes all culture—not just the West. A consequence of this translation is that the primitive appears not to be the subject of Freud's arguments about culture, but placed outside of it.

Freud did indeed make a distinction between 'primitive' and 'civilised' but the distance between the two is never fixed in his writing. In the very texts where he collapses the two into each other, he also warns the reader against any such assimilation of the 'savage' to the prehistoric. Freud's *Totem and Taboo* begins by assimilating some residents of the Non-European world to the anteriority of human history:

> es leben Menschen, von denen wir glauben, daß sie den Primitiven noch sehr nahe stehen, viel näher als wir, in denen wir daher die direkten Abkömmlinge und Vertreter der früheren Menschen erblicken. Wir urteilen so über die

89. Raymond Williams, "Civilisation," in *Keywords* (London: Flamingo, 1981), 58.
90. Williams, "Anthropology," in *Keywords*, 39.
91. "If there had been no railway to conquer distances, my child would never have left his native town and I should need no telephone to hear his voice; if travelling across the ocean by ship had not been introduced, my friend would not have embarked on his sea voyage and I should not need a cable to relieve my anxiety about him." Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:88.

> sogenannten Wilden und halbwilden Völker, deren Seelenleben ein besonderes Interesse für uns gewinnt, wenn wir in ihm eine gut erhaltene Vorstufe unserer eigenen Entwicklung erkennen dürfen.[92]
>
> [There are men still living who, as we believe, stand very near to primitive man, far nearer than we do, and whom we therefore regard as his direct heirs and representatives. Such is our view of those whom we describe as savages or half-savages; and their mental life must have a peculiar interest for us if we are right in seeing in it a well-preserved picture of an early stage of our own development.][93]

Yet discord and contradiction are built into *Totem and Taboo*. This is already in evidence in the sentence quoted, in which Freud's hesitations and qualifications: 'as we believe'; 'whom we therefore regard'; 'such is our view of those whom we describe'; 'if we are right'—qualify and delay Freud's claim. In fact the *Standard Edition* translation omits the double distancing in the German, which is made clear in the new translation by Shaun Whiteside: "there are people alive whom we think of as being still very close to primitive man, much closer than we are ourselves, and for this reason we see them as direct descendants and representatives of earlier human beings."[94] Already, this extract is beginning to sound like a description of the western man's perception of men who are close to 'the primitives' [den Primitiven], who themselves, the sentence suggests, are distinct from 'earlier human beings' [früheren Menschen]. In fact the verb 'erblicken' conveys the impression of something glimpsed or caught sight of. When Freud says that we catch sight of earlier human beings in men whom we believe to be close to primitives, it is unclear whether this is due to something that exists to be seen, or something that we want to see.

It was in an attempt to elucidate "some unsolved problems of social psychology"—the phrase in German is 'Völkerpsychologie'—that Freud made his

92. Freud, "Totem und Tabu," *GW* 9:5.
93. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 13:1. Note that here too the *Standard Edition* translation has collapsed the 'Primitiven' (primitives) and 'früheren Menschen' (early men) into a single phrase, "primitive man".
94. Freud, "Totem and Taboo" in *Murder Mourning and Melancholia*, trans. Shaun Whiteside, (London: Penguin Classics, 2005), 5.

most extensive use of anthropological material. [95] Yet in a footnote, Freud offers a warning to just such an enterprise. The question of translation returns here with the word 'Völker' which can be rendered as people, race, tribe or nation.

> Man darf nicht daran vergessen, daß die primitiven Völker keine jungen Völker sind, sondern eigentlich ebenso alt wie die zivilisiertesten, und daß man kein Recht zur Erwartung hat, sie würden ihre ursprünglichen Ideen und Institutionen ohne jede Entwicklung und Entstellung für unsere Kenntnisnahme aufbewahrt haben.[96]
>
> [It should not be forgotten that primitive races are not young races but are in fact as old as civilized races. There is no reason to suppose that, for the benefit of our information, they have retained their original ideas and institutions undeveloped and undistorted.][97]

Here, 'primitiven Völker' is translated into English as 'primitive races' even though at the beginning of the text, 'Völkerpsychologie' is rendered as 'social psychology' instead of 'race psychology'. The translation not only renders 'Völker' as 'races', but also includes the word one more time in the translated footnote than in the German; 'die zivilisiertesten' is translated as 'civilised races' when the German could also be read as not having an object, as just 'the civilised'. The translation adds the dimension of race to the distinction that Freud makes between primitive and civilised. Freud here reinforces the idea that 'primitiven Völker' are objects of epistemological desire for the modern man, who may want them, *for the benefit of our information,* to be 'a well preserved picture of an early stage.'

In a manner far ahead of his time, Freud also acknowledges all the problems with the anthropological 'information' he uses in his text. Anticipating later critiques of texts such as *The Golden Bough*, and of Frazer's 'armchair' anthropology, Freud writes that anthropological 'information' is interpreted by people who are removed from the ones who collected the material in the first place. He then flags the

95. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 13: xiii.
96. Freud, "Totem und Tabu," *GW* 9, 124.
97. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 13, 102. Shaun Whiteside's translation reads: "[w]e should not forget that primitive people are not young peoples, but are actually just as old as the most civilised, and that we should not expect them to have preserved their original ideas and institutions for our attention without any evolution or distortion." *Murder Mourning and Melancholia*, 159.

language question: "[t]he observers are not always acquainted with the native language but may be obliged to rely on the help of interpreters or to conduct their inquiries through the medium of pidgin English."[98] As if this were not enough, Freud goes on to ask why the savage would share intimate details with his foreign interlocutors, instead of offering misleading information.

The idea of the 'primitive' undergoes further deconstruction in another footnote, which is concerned with the problem of origins. In the very first section of the text, Freud describes how difficult it is to establish what is truly prior—'Ursprüngliche'.

> Man darf aber nicht vergessen, daß auch die primitivsten und konservativsten Völker in gewissem Sinne alte Völker sind und eine lange Zeit hinter sich haben, in welcher das Ursprüngliche bei ihnen viel Entwicklung und Entstellung erfahren hat. So findet man den Totemismus heute bei den Völkern, die ihn noch zeigen, in den mannigfaltigsten Stadien des Verfalles, der Abbröcklung, des Überganges zu anderen sozialen und religiösen Institutionen, oder aber in stationären Ausgestaltungen, die sich weit genug von seinem ursprünglichen Wesen entfernt haben mögen. Die Schwierigkeit liegt dann darin, daß es nicht ganz leicht ist zu entscheiden, was an den aktuellen Verhältnissen als getreues Abbild der sinnvollen Vergangenheit, was als sekundäre Entstellung derselben gefaßt werden darf.[99]
>
> [But it must not be forgotten that even the most primitive and conservative races are in some sense ancient races and have a long past history behind them during which their original conditions of life have been subject to much development and distortion. So it comes about that in those races in which totemism exists today, we may find it in various stages of decay and disintegration or in the process of transition to other social and religious institutions, or again in a stationary condition which may differ greatly from the original one. The difficulty in this last case is to decide whether we should

98. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 13:102. For a discussion of Frazer's text, see Robert Fraser, *The Making of The Golden Bough: The Origins and Growth of an Argument* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990).
99. Freud, "Totem und Tabu," *GW* 9:6-7.

regard the present state of things as a true picture of the significant features of the past or as a secondary distortion of them.][100]

Freud begins *Totem and Taboo* by suggesting that we can turn to the primitive for an understanding of the past: "their mental life must have a peculiar interest for us if we are right in seeing in it a well-preserved picture of an early stage of our own development".[101] But he then mocks such a claim, saying that there is *no reason to suppose* that the 'primitiven Völker' have, for the benefit of the modern observer, kept their ideas and institutions in a state of stasis. Then, he questions the very idea of an 'early stage of development' that can be recovered, that is preserved and available for observation. It is no surprise then, that in another footnote towards the end of his text he will write that "[t]he determination of the original state of things inevitably remains a matter of construction."[102]

In one of the most sustained discussions of the place of the primitive in Freud's work, *Aborignal Populations in the Mind,* Celia Brickman writes that for "Freud, as for the evolutionary anthropology from which he borrowed, the 'primitive' referred to the earliest and most rudimentary stages of a universally conceived psychological development, as well as to 'savages' considered, by virtue of their differences from European cultural norms and their darker skins, to be less culturally advanced than their European cousins."[103] I find that this not the case. While Freud, at times, may seem to be party to a desire to equate the figure of the primitive to an ancient past, he both deconstructs such a desire and recognizes the primitive's claim to having *an* history rather than being *the* historical. Brickman argues that "the 'primitive' is the key to the racial economy of psychoanalysis, the watchword of a psychologizing discourse behind which is concealed an ideology of race."[104] It remains a question for me whether Freud's prejudices line up along the divisions of race, and instead of searching for evidence of racism, I am interested in what in Freud's thinking allows

100. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 13:2. Shaun Whiteside's translation of the last line of the extract reads: "The difficulty, then, lies in the fact that it is not very easy to decide what we may see, in contemporary conditions, as a faithful picture of the meaningful past, and what as a secondary distortion." *Murder Mourning and Melancholia,* 21.
101. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 13:1.
102. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 13:102. ["Die Feststellung des ursprünglichen Zustandes bleibt also jedesmal eine Sache der Konstruktion."] "Totem und Tabu" *GW* 9:125.
103. Celia Brickman *Aboriginal Populations in the Mind* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 4-5.
104. Brickman *Aboriginal Populations*, 5.

him to challenge and destabilize these prejudices. *Totem and Taboo* alerts us to the contradictory and vexed space the primitive occupies in psychoanalytic thought, and rather than see this as an instance of 'an ideology of race' masked by the psychoanalytic theorization, I suggest that the problem of the primitive in Freud's work is linked to the question of origins, causality, and temporality, with which he also struggled in his other writing. It is here, in a mythological mode, that Freud tries to work out the problem of the 'Ur', the problem of the lost origin that nevertheless stays vital and influential in individual and group histories.

This is especially clear in relation to the concept of repression. In his essay "Repression" [1915] written two years after *Totem and Taboo*, Freud made a distinction between 'primal repression', and 'repression proper'. The former is "a first phase of repression, which consists in the psychical (ideational) representative of the instinct being denied entrance into the conscious."[105] This process is called 'Urverdrängung'. Primal repression then acts with a magnetic force, drawing other content to it. Laplanche and Pontalis, in their discussion of 'Urverdrängung' point out that primal repression is "postulated above all on the basis of its effects"[106] and its origin is to be sought in "very intense archaic experiences."[107] Here, we find in Freud's writing, a way of explaining a process observed in the present through a reference to something in the past. But this is a peculiar kind of past—both irrecoverable and intensely vital.

'Urverdrängung' (primal repression), 'Urphantasie' (primal phantasy), 'Urszene' (primal scene), are all constructs used by Freud to explain the effects of events in the archaic past. The work of Freud as a theoretician, as well as the clinical practice of psychoanalysis is involved in studying the traces that these events have left in the psyche. The traces and effects are real and observable, but the event itself only survives in a distorted form. I argue that for Freud the 'Urmensch' was part of this series. This concern with the 'Ur' is testament to the crucial place that psychoanalysis accords history and the past. Yet while it is concerned with the past, the very idea of what the past is, is itself transformed by a psychoanalytic account of temporality. We can read Freud's repeated attempts to grapple with what was primary and secondary, both in human history and in psychic repression, as an

105. Freud, "Repression," *SE* 14:148.
106. J. Laplanche and J.B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psycho-Analysis* trans. Donald Nicholson Smith (London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1973), 334.
107. Laplanche and Pontalis, *Language*, 334.

attempt to take on board what psychoanalysis has done to temporality, both theoretically, and as a therapeutic process.

The psychoanalytical concept of a 'construction in analysis' can help us further our understanding of Freud's use of the 'primitive'. I argue that, for Freud, the primitive was as much 'a matter of construction' [eine Sache der Konstruktion] as the 'determination of the original state of things'.[108] Freud argued that there were some incidents, phases of a childhood memory or fantasy that could not be recalled, yet which had to be postulated and reconstructed. In dealing with the unconscious as it emerges in the analytic encounter, the analyst is positioned differently from the patient regarding what is remembered. Freud writes that the analyst's "task is to make out what has been forgotten, from the traces which it has left behind or, more correctly, to *construct* it."[109] A construction is effective when it can encourage the patient to produce more unconscious material. Like the speech of the analyst, the construction may call forth something from the unconscious even when what has been constructed is factually incorrect: "our bait of falsehood had taken a carp of truth."[110]

Freud locates the value of the construction in its ability to contain a potentially transformative truth—the measure of which can only be given by the one to whom it is offered. Writing of the kernel of truth that the construction may contain, Freud compares its vitality to that of a delusion or hallucination, which, he argues, also contain 'historical truth.'[111] Elaborating on this idea of 'historical truth', Freud writes that it has "a compulsive character: it *must* be believed. To the extent to which it is distorted, it may be described as a *delusion*; in so far as it brings a return of the past, it must be called the *truth*."[112] Thus for Freud the truth was not so much the past accurately remembered, as it was the vital, recurring quality of the past.

Yet this past is constantly revised, reconstituted by the present, by the

108. Freud, "Totem und Tabu," *GW* 9:125.
109. Freud, "Constructions in Analysis," *SE* 23:257-258.
110. Freud, "Constructions in Analysis," *SE* 23:261.
111. "The vain effort would be abandoned of convincing the patient of the error of his delusion and of its contradiction of reality; and, on the contrary, the recognition of its kernel of truth would afford common ground upon which the therapeutic work could develop. That work would consist in liberating the fragment of historical truth from its distortions and its attachments to the actual present day and in leading it back to the point in the past to which it belongs." Freud, "Constructions in Analysis," *SE* 23:268.
112. Freud, "Moses and Monotheism," *SE* 23:130.

circumstances of remembering. Describing the work the analyst does in order to offer to the analysand a reconstruction of her past, Freud writes that it is very difficult to ascertain the time to which a fragment belongs. He compares an analytic construction to an archaeological investigation, writing that "[o]ne of the most ticklish problems that confronts the archaeologist is notoriously the determination of the relative age of his finds; and if an object makes its appearance in some particular level, it often remains to be decided whether it belongs to that level or whether it was carried down to that level owing to some subsequent disturbance." [113] Freud's language and concerns here are strikingly similar to those he expressed in *Totem and Taboo,* when he found it difficult to establish the 'primitivity' of the people he was discussing. Yet it is this very difficulty posed by the mobility of the past that the psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas sees as a source of freedom:

> Historical thinking is a psychic function. Reviewing the past, retrieving finite details from it and giving them new, indeed contemporary, meanings, detraumatizes the subject who suffers from the ailments of many a thing done. […] The dumb facts of an existence still lie in their chronological place, weighing heavily upon personal development. Doing history, however—reviewing this past and thereby transforming it—is a psychic function always alive to changed ways of seeing the world that will occur in the patient.[114]

The very irresolution that Freud inhabits, and struggles with in his dealings with the past, may then be, following Bollas, the best way to survive, the most liberating response to this past. Towards the end of his life, in *Moses and Monotheism,* Freud himself described *Totem and Taboo* as a construction. He was responding to criticisms of his work, which pointed out that the anthropologists whose work he relied on had been discredited, their theories rejected:

> In 1912 I attempted, in my *Totem and Taboo*, to reconstruct the ancient situation from which these consequences followed. To this day I hold firmly to this construction. I have repeatedly met with violent reproaches for not having altered my opinions in later editions of my book in spite of the fact that more

113. Freud, "Constructions in Analysis," *SE* 23:259.
114. Christopher Bollas, "The Function of History" in *Cracking Up: The Work of Unconscious Experience* (London: Routledge, 1995), 143.

> recent ethnologists have unanimously rejected Robertson Smith's hypotheses and have in part brought forward other, totally divergent theories. I may say in reply that these ostensible advances are well known to me. But I have not been convinced either of the correctness of these innovations or of Robertson Smith's errors. A denial is not a refutation, an innovation is not necessarily an advance. Above all, however, I am not an ethnologist but a psycho-analyst. I had a right to take out of ethnological literature what I might need for the work of analysis.[115]

To date, Freud's arguments are challenged on the grounds of his references to out-of-date anthropologists (Frazer, Robertson-Smith) and biologists (Lamarck). Such a reading, in my opinion, misses the point of what Freud was trying to do with these theories, the transformation they undergo in his writing. In distancing himself from ethnology and claiming that he has a 'right' to take what he needs from the ethnological writing, he indicates an associative, literary approach to anthropological material, underscoring the interpretative aspect of psychoanalytic thinking. I would argue that the primitive serves as a construction, a fabricated ground through which Freud tries to understand some of the most persistent questions in his elaboration of psychoanalysis. Never a very stable ground, the figure of the primitive as Freud constructs it, embodies the complexities that psychoanalysis introduces into our understanding of history, and as I will discuss in the following section, of death and ambivalence.

The Uncanny Primitive

Amongst Freud's most famous essays, "The Uncanny" [1919], published in the wake of the First World War, discusses the curious etymology of the German 'unheimlich', and E.T.A. Hoffmann's story "The Sandman". Freud finds in the word 'heimlich' two contrary meanings—both the familiar and the homely, and that which is strange and potentially threatening: "[t]hus heimlich is a word the meaning of which develops in the direction of ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, unheimlich."[116] Freud associates Schelling's definition of the uncanny:

115. Freud, "Moses and Monotheism," *SE* 23:131.
116. Freud, "The Uncanny," *SE* 17:226.

"everything is *unheimlich* that ought to have remained secret and hidden but has come to light" with a return of the repressed. [117] Hoffmann's short story allows him to note other aspects of the uncanny: it is aroused by objects that may be either alive or dead, and by the idea of the double. The uncanny, as Julia Kristeva puts it in *Strangers to Ourselves,* is "an immanence of the strange within the familiar".[118]

Freud wrote "The Uncanny" just a year before *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* [1920], at a time when European cities were saturated with the absence of those who had gone to war and never returned. It is in the latter text that Freud expresses resolutely anti-progressivist, anti-evolutionary views: "[t]here is unquestionably no universal instinct towards higher development observable in the animal or plant world, […] it is often merely a matter of opinion when we declare that one stage of development is higher than another, and on the other hand biology teaches us that higher development in one respect is very frequently balanced or outweighed by involution in another."[119] He had expressed similar sentiments about social institutions in an essay written during the war, in which he commented on the feeling of disillusionment that Europeans felt seeing what their fellow citizens were capable of during wartime: "our fellow-citizens have not sunk so low as we feared, because they had never risen so high as we believed".[120] Commenting on how this tumultuous recent history inflects "The Uncanny", the literary critic Hugh Haughton writes: "[a]s the literature of the Gothic developed in the wake of secular Enlightenment liberalism, revealing the haunting persistence of the architecture, religious beliefs and superstitious terrors of the un-Enlightened past, so psychoanalysis after the First World War increasingly conjours up a Gothic closet, an uncanny double, at the heart of modernity."[121]

---

117. Freud, "The Uncanny," *SE* 17:224.
118. Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 183.
119. Freud, "Beyond the Pleasure Principle", *SE* 18:41.
120. Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death", *SE* 14:14.
121. Hugh Haughton, "Introduction" to *The Uncanny* (London: Penguin Classics, 2003), xlii. In "The Uncanny" Freud mentions a "naïve enough short story" published in *Strand Magazine*, as having a remarkable uncanny effect (*SE* 17: 244-245). Haughton identifies this story as "Inexplicable" by L.G. Moberly. The ghostly alligators that trouble the newly married couple in the story are connected to the colony by the association made by a character, a friend of the couple and a "delightful person who had travelled all over the world", between the smell in the house and an alligator swamp in New Guinea. L.G. Moberly, "Inexplicable," *Strand Magazine* 54, (1917): 576. They are also linked to India by the word 'alligator': "This is the usual Anglo-Indian term for the great lacertine amphibia of the rivers. It was apparently in origin a corruption of the Spanish *el* or *al lagarto* (from Latin *lacerta*),

Reading Freud's essay on the uncanny, the reader encounters the themes of death and ambivalence. A feeling of the uncanny arises in relation to death because we have no way of mastering the knowledge of death: "the proposition 'All men are mortal' is paraded in text-books of logic as an example of a generalization, but no human being really grasps it, and our unconscious has as little use now as ever for the idea of its own mortality."[122] For 'modern' people (Freud's word is "educated") there is something uncanny about death because we have repressed the "highly ambiguous and ambivalent" attitude towards the dead, and replaced it with "an unambiguous feeling of piety."[123] In *Totem and Taboo,* Freud had linked ambivalence and death: "[a]nyone who investigates the origin and significance of dreams of the death of loved relatives (of parents or brothers or sisters) will be able to convince himself that dreamers, children and savages are at one in their attitude towards the dead- an attitude based upon emotional ambivalence."[124] Freud arrives at this link between ambivalence and death after studying the taboos around death observed by 'primitives'.

Yet this link between death, ambivalence, and primitive would only be fully articulated during the First World War, described by Freud, in an essay titled "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death", as "bloody and more destructive than any war of other days, because of the enormously increased perfection of weapons of attack and defence".[125] In this essay, in a section titled "Our Attitude Towards Death", Freud writes that modern people "showed an unmistakable tendency to put death on one side, to eliminate it from life".[126] Further, the death of others was accompanied by an attitude of piety, overlooking the person's misdeeds and suspending criticism of them so much so that it seemed that "consideration for the dead, who, after all, no longer need it, is more important to us than the truth, and certainly, for most of us, than consideration for the living."[127] Turning then to the figure of the primitive, Freud writes that the primitive retained, acknowledged the

---

'a lizard'." Henry Yule and A.C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo Indian Words and Phrases, and of Kindred Terms, Etymological, Historical, Geographical and Discursive* (London: John Murray (1886), 13.

122. Freud, "The Uncanny," *SE* 17:242.

123. Freud, "The Uncanny," *SE* 17:243.

124. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 17:62. This begs the question of who is outside the categories of dreamers, children, and savages.

125. Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death," *SE* 14:6.

126. Freud, "Thoughts," *SE* 14:17.

127. Freud, "Thoughts," *SE* 14:18.

ambivalence towards the dead: "these beloved dead had also been enemies and strangers who had aroused in him some degree of hostile feeling."[128] It was acknowledgement of this ambivalence, "beside the dead body of the loved one", that led to the first ethical commandment against killing. "[A]cquired in relation to dead people who were loved, as a reaction against the satisfaction of the hatred hidden behind the grief for them" Freud writes that this prohibition was then "gradually extended to strangers who were not loved, and finally even to enemies." This ethical attitude was lost to civilized man: "When the furious struggle of the present war has been decided, each one of the victorious fighters will return home joyfully to his wife and children, unchecked and undisturbed by thoughts of the enemies he has killed whether at close quarters or at long range." In contrast to this, Freud says that 'savages',

> are far from being remorseless murderers; when they return victorious from the war-path they may not set foot in their villages or touch their wives till they have atoned for the murders they committed in war by penances which are often long and tedious. It is easy, of course, to attribute this to their superstition: the savage still goes in fear of the avenging spirits of the slain. But the spirits of his slain enemy are nothing but the expression of his bad conscience about his blood-guilt; behind this superstition there lies concealed a vein of ethical sensitiveness which has been lost by us civilized men.[129]

When the 'primitive' itself makes an appearance in the text of "The Uncanny", it is once again in a discussion of our attitude towards death. Yet here, Freud does not endow the primitive's attitudes towards death with an ethical charge, instead presenting them to the reader as something that can be 'surmounted':

> Let us take the uncanny associated with the omnipotence of thoughts, with the prompt fulfilment of wishes, with secret injurious powers and with the return of the dead. The condition under which the feeling of uncanniness arises here is unmistakable. We—or our primitive forefathers—once believed that these possibilities were realities, and were convinced that they actually happened. Nowadays we no longer believe in them, we have *surmounted*

128. Freud, "Thoughts," *SE* 14:23. All subsequent citations in this paragraph refer to this source.
129. Freud, "Thoughts," *SE* 14:23.

> these modes of thought; but we do not feel quite sure of our new beliefs, and the old ones still exist within us ready to seize upon any confirmation […] anyone who has completely and finally rid himself of animistic beliefs will be insensible to this type of the uncanny.[130]

Our 'primitive forefathers' were duped, we have come a long way since then, and we are capable of further progress towards a rational self—Freud here seems to be in flight from his own account, at the beginning of this essay, of our inability to fathom death. Instead, he tries to create a distinction between that which has been *surmounted*, and that which is *repressed.* The distance between primitive and civilized is exercised here: "the animistic beliefs of civilized people are in a state of having been (to a greater or lesser extent) *surmounted* [rather than repressed]."[131] I suggest that this attempt to separate out the primitive from the civilized, the surmounted from the repressed is testament to Freud's attempt to come to terms with the violent actions of 'civilised man', the devastation surrounding him, while attempting to hold on to a benevolent, even hopeful view of civilisation—a crucial contradiction in Freud's work that I explore in the following section.

Yet not unlike his other attempts to mark out a difference between the primitive and civilized, between past and present, Freud takes away with one hand what he gives with the other. Immediately after making this distinction between that which is surmounted and that which is repressed, he says that "the distinction is often a hazy one".[132] The 'primitive' may be occasionally be the fall guy in Freud's attempt to hold on to a progressivist view of civilisation, but he cannot be done away with so easily. Psychoanalysis, Freud writes, dealing as it does with the unconscious, with problems of death and mourning "has itself become uncanny to many people".[133] In saying this, he suggests an intimacy between the primitive and psychoanalysis: it is as though the primitive is the double of psychoanalysis: they come to occupy the same uncanny place. In his discussion of the uncanny, the philosopher and film theorist Mladen Dolar connects it to the Lacanian concept of extimité, a dimension that "points neither to the interior nor to the exterior, but is located there where the most intimate interiority coincides with the exterior and

130. Freud, "The Uncanny," *SE* 17:248.
131. Freud, "The Uncanny," *SE* 17:249. Both the brackets and parentheses are Freud's own.
132. Freud, "The Uncanny," *SE* 17:249.
133. Freud, "The Uncanny," *SE* 17:243

becomes threatening, provoking horror and anxiety."[134] This allows us to understand the simultaneous intimacy and excision of the primitive in psychoanalysis.

The primitive in psychoanalysis has a privileged relationship to the unconscious. This is not the same as saying that the primitive *is* the unconscious. Rather, the construction of the primitive represents a mode of existence that respects and acknowledges unconscious mental processes, and is able to create a space for them in its way of perceiving the world. This sounds like the goal of psychoanalysis itself: "[w]o es war, soll ich werden", offered by Freud as one of the ends of psychoanalysis in his *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*.[135] Freud wrote that the ego (das Ich) had to be freed from takeover by the superego, allowing it go where the id was. Lacan took up this utterance as a cornerstone of his interpretation of Freud. According to him, this is the demand that psychoanalysis makes upon the subject—to come to be (werden) in the place of its jokes, dreams and failures—the ways in which the unconscious insists.[136] Reading this statement alongside our discussion of the primitive, we may add that the end suggested in this statement is to come to be in a place where mastery fails, like in the experience of ambivalence, which cannot be mastered but which must be accommodated, for which room must be made.

Writing that various commentaries on the uncanny have tried to ascribe a content to it, Dolar argues that psychoanalysis is unique in not giving it a content, rather maintaining the uncanny as a limit to the possibilities of meaning. It is in this relationship of psychoanalysis to the uncanny that Julia Kristeva finds the possibilities of an ethical relationship with an other: "[w]ith Freud indeed, foreignness, an uncanny one, creeps into the tranquility of reason itself, and, without being restricted to madness, beauty, or faith anymore than to ethnicity or race, irrigates our very speaking-being, […] we know that we are foreigners to ourselves, and it is with the help of that sole support that we can attempt to live with others."[137]

---

134. Mlladen Dolar "'I shall be with you on your wedding night' Lacan and the Uncanny," *October* 58, (Autumn, 1991): 6.
135. Freud, "New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis," *SE* 22:80. The Strachey translation reads "Where id was, there ego shall be".
136. Jacques Lacan, "The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious" in *Écrits* trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006), 435.
137. Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves,* 170. For a critique of Kristeva's ideas of cosmopolitanism see Gayatri Spivak, "French Feminism In An International Frame," *Yale French Studies* 62, (1981): 154-

This question, of a relationship to an other, would continue to absorb Freud, and is at the heart of his troubled text, *Civilisation and its Discontents.*

Civilisation: The Garrison in a Conquered City

The concept of 'civilisation', just like that of the 'primitive', is key to an account of psychoanalysis in a colonial situation. As ideal and identification, 'civilisation' floods the writings of the colonial psychoanalysts, anthropologists, and administrators whose work I discuss in the following chapters. The history of psychoanalysis in India, embedded as it is in a wider colonial context, bears witness to just how much could be legitimated by the invocation of this compelling, affectively magnetic term, into which congealed fantasy, desire, patriotism and imperial identifications. And yet, as we will have the opportunity to note at various points in this thesis, something comes unstuck in the attempt to weld psychoanalysis to colonialism. As I suggest in the following reading of Freud, psychoanalysis is too ambivalent and uneasy about 'civilisation' to endorse it as an ideal. In fact, I find that both theoretically and historically, Freud's theories about civilisation are a powerful irritant to the civilising mission.

In an essay titled "'Civilized' Sexual Morality and Modern Nervous Illness" [1908], Freud made a link between culture and illness. The demands of sexual morality were too great (in the service of a fantasy of sexual difference, of feminine innocence, and virtue)—something had to give, so people fell ill. The conflict between sexual norms and sexual drives was unbearable, and it was in the frustration, and imprisonment of sexual drives that Freud located the ill effects of culture. Twenty two years later, in *Civilization and its Discontents* [1930], Freud offered an expanded account of man's discomfort in civilisation.[138] He is eloquent about this discomfort: "our possibilities for happiness are already restricted by our constitution. Unhappiness is much less difficult to experience."[139] The human subject lives under the constant threat of suffering: "from our own body, which is doomed to decay and dissolution and which cannot even do without pain and anxiety as warning signals; from the external world, which may rage against us with

184. See also Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak and Ellen Rooney, "In a Word: *Interview*" in *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (New York: Routledge, 1993).
138. Freud suggested 'Man's Discomfort in Civilization' as the translation of 'Das Unbehagen in der Kultur'. James Strachey, "Editor's Introduction," in "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:60.
139. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:76-77.

overwhelming and merciless forces of destruction; and finally from our own relations to other men."[140] The world, and life are hard to bear and we cope, he writes, only through the help of "powerful deflections" and "substitutive satisfactions", that is, with the help of day dreams and intoxicants. [141] Yet despite this multifarious suffering, Freud thinks we are reluctant to identify the cause of our discomfort. He arrives at this cause through a process of elimination. The fragility of our own bodies, and the force of nature, he writes, cannot be mastered. Here we must "submit to the inevitable".[142] What surprises Freud is that we do not immediately turn our attention to the remaining source of suffering, "the inadequacy of the regulations which adjust the mutual relationships of human beings in the family, state and society." We are trapped, it seems, by our own good intentions: "we cannot see why the regulations made by ourselves should not, on the contrary, be a protection and benefit for everyone of us."

Freud had offered a fuller critique of 'state and society', during the First World War, some fifteen years before he wrote *Civilisation and Its Discontents*. In "Thoughts for the Times on War Death", he writes:

> The individual citizen can with horror convince himself in this war of what would occasionally cross his mind in peace-time—that the state has forbidden to the individual the practice of wrongdoing, not because it desires to abolish it, but because it desires to monopolize it, like salt and tobacco. A belligerent state permits itself every such misdeed, every such act of violence, as would disgrace the individual. It makes use against the enemy not only of the accepted *rules de guerre*, but of deliberate lying and deception as well—and to a degree which seems to exceed the usage of former wars. The state exacts the utmost degree of obedience and sacrifice from its citizens, but at the same time it treats them like children by an excess of secrecy and a censorship upon news and expressions of opinion which leaves the spirits of those whose intellects it thus suppresses defenceless against every unfavourable turn of events and every sinister rumour. It absolves itself from the guarantees and treaties by which it was bound to other states, and

140. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:77.
141. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents" *SE* 21:75.
142. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents" *SE* 21:86. Subsequent citations in this paragraph refer to this source.

confesses shamelessly to its own rapacity and lust for power, which the private individual has then to sanction in the name of patriotism.[143]

Not only is there something belligerent and power hungry about the State during wartime, even at the best of times it only represents the interests of the few. In his exchange with Albert Einstein on the question of war, Freud once again identifies the injustice inherent in our social arrangements. "The justice of the community" he writes in an essay titled "Why War" (1933), "becomes an expression of the unequal degrees of power obtaining within it; the laws are made by and for the ruling members and find little room for the rights of those in subjection."[144]

The exploration of the discontents of civilisation, Freud suggests, involves giving up the idealisation that our social institutions are benevolent and democratic. Yet one might also argue that Freud challenges this idealisation at the expense of another. He is too quick to accept, perhaps even to wish, that we have accepted as 'inevitable' the vulnerability of our bodies, and the force of nature. Having lived through the First World War, Freud was witness to technological warfare, a great refusal to accept either human vulnerability or the untameable aspects of the natural world. Further, he himself could celebrate such human interventions into nature, even likening the work of psychoanalysis to the "draining of the Zuider Zee."[145] Malcolm Bowie has drawn attention to how the text of *Civilisation and its Discontents* is riven with Freud's ambivalence about civilisation. Freud mentions, in his text, much that he loves in high western, European culture, and is a "remembrancer" of this culture.[146] Yet it is amongst his beloved artefacts that Freud comes up against an impossibility in civilisation, and then, as the theoretician of the death drive, he is also "a catastrophist, no longer the admirer and custodian of art-objects but their scourge."[147] The text is witness to his unresolved struggle to find a stable ethical ground for civilisation.

One of the most striking explorations of this difficulty is to be found in Freud's discussion of the injunction to 'love the neighbour'. Having found it impossible to ground a stable and benevolent civilisation in sexual love, Freud turns

143. Freud, "Thoughts," *SE* 14:279-280.
144. Freud, "Why War," *SE* 22:206.
145. Freud, "New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis," *SE* 22:80.
146. Bowie, "Memory and Desire," 14.
147. Bowie, "Memory and Desire," 14.

to the "one of the ideal demands" of "civilised society", the injunction to "love thy neighbour as thyself".[148] He lists the many barriers in the way of such love—why must I love an unworthy stranger, love is precious and would be wasted upon this person I do not care about, love given abstractly to "an inhabitant of this earth, like an insect, an earth-worm or a grass snake" would be love diluted.[149] Further, this neighbour may just be hostile towards me, thinking "nothing of jeering at me, insulting me, slandering me and showing his superior power".[150] After describing these impossibilities in the way of neighbour-love, Freud offers this devastating view of human life:

> men are not gentle creatures who want to be loved, and who at the most can defend themselves if they are attacked; they are, on the contrary, creatures among whose instinctual endowments is to be reckoned a powerful share of aggressiveness. As a result, their neighbour is for them not only a potential helper or sexual object, but also someone who tempts them to satisfy their aggressiveness on him, to exploit his capacity for work without compensation, to use him sexually without his consent, to seize his possessions, to humiliate him, to cause him pain, to torture and kill him. *Homo homini lupus.*[151]

Aggression, Freud finds, "disturbs our relations with our neighbour".[152] Yet despite the disturbance that such aggression introduces into culture, "[i]t is clearly not easy for men to give up the satisfaction of the inclination to aggression."[153] It is this that leads Freud to recapitulate his thesis of the death drive, developed after the First World War in his text *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. The experiences of shell-shocked soldiers, of traumatic neuroses, and the observation of children's play had led Freud to revise his former opinion that people are guided by the pleasure principle. Existing alongside the pleasure principle he had found a drive towards

148. Freud, "Civilisation and its Discontents," *SE* 21:109.
149. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:109. "According to Schopenhauer's famous simile of the freezing porcupines no one can tolerate a too intimate approach to his neighbour." Freud "Group Psychology," *SE* 18:101.
150. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:110
151. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:111.
152. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:112.
153. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:114.

repetition and death, a *beyond* of pleasure.[154] Human subjects were capable, indeed driven to seek out pain and annihilation. Led back to this drive towards aggression by his argument in *Civilisation and its Discontents*, Freud writes that "it constitutes the greatest impediment of civilisation."[155] He then argues that "civilisation is a special process which mankind undergoes" and that this process is "in the service of Eros, whose purpose it is to combine single human individuals, and after that families, then races, peoples and nations, into one great unity, the unity of mankind."[156] Civilisation then, according to Freud, is a struggle between Eros and Death.

Yet just as things seem to be getting clarified into this opposition between Eros and Death, Freud finds that the problem of aggressiveness has returned. Thinking about how civilisation sets about to limit aggressiveness, Freud finds that it does so by internalising it: "it is taken over by a portion of the ego, which sets itself up over the rest of the ego as a super-ego, and which now, in the form of 'conscience', is ready to put into action against the ego the same harsh aggressiveness that the ego would have liked to satisfy upon other, extraneous individuals."[157] The superego sets itself up, Freud writes, like a garrison in a conquered city, keeping watch over things. But there is something insatiable about its demands: "[e]very renunciation of instinct now becomes a dynamic source of conscience and every fresh renunciation increases the latter's severity and intolerance."[158] Freud had suggested earlier in the text that civilisation, Eros, was opposed to the drive toward aggression. Yet the sacrifice of aggressiveness that

---

154. "The manifestations of a compulsion to repeat (which we have described as occurring in the early activities of infantile mental life as well as among the events of psycho-analytic treatment) exhibit to a high degree an instinctual character and, when they act in opposition to the pleasure principle, give the appearance of some 'daemonic' force at work." Freud, "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" *SE* 18:34.
155. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:122.
156. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:122. In her essay "Eros the Bittersweet", Anne Carson discusses the treatment of eros in ancient Greek poetry. She finds that for ancient Greek poets, eros was characterised by the coming together of antithetical feelings, the classic example being Sappho's description of eros as *glukupikron* (sweet-bitter). Rather than functioning as the unifying force that Freud describes, Carson finds that "eros can split the mind in two". Eros produces division in the mind of the lover ("two states on mind in one" writes Sappho) and also relies on being distanced and divided from the beloved ("a space must be maintained or desire ends", writes Carson), reminding us that even the conjoined beings of Aristophanes' myth were not satisfied with their unity with the beloved, and "started rolling toward Olympus to make an attempt on the gods." Anne Carson, *Eros the Bittersweet* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) 15; 21; 42; 90.
157. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:123
158. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *SE* 21:128.

civilisation demands ends up magnifying the capacity for aggression, creating the superego, which Leo Bersani calls a "monster of moralized violence". [159]

The problem, Freud seems to be suggesting, is not just aggression, but our attempt to control it. Destruction is far worse when it cathects Eros: "[t]he satisfaction of these destructive impulses is of course facilitated by their admixture with others of an erotic and idealistic kind" Freud wrote in 'Why War?' adding that "[w]hen we read of the atrocities of the past, it sometimes seems as though the idealistic motives served only as an excuse for the destructive appetites and sometimes—in the case, for instance, of the cruelties of the Inquisition—it seems as though the idealistic motives had pushed themselves forward in consciousness, while the destructive ones lent them an unconscious reinforcement."[160] Freud is forging a critique of the superego, this upholder of ideals. The description of the superego in *Civilisation and its Discontents* is akin to the description of the cruel and hostile neighbour whom we are meant to distrust and fear. We are our own worst neighbours, Freud suggests, or to put it in another way—what we most despise and fear in the neighbour is already in us, is a part of ourselves.

The superego sounds not only like the neighbour, but also like Freud's description of the wartime belligerent state, which "exacts the utmost degree of obedience and sacrifice" from its citizens, but itself has the most aggressive lust for power.[161] We take our ideals and institutionalize them. The State, the like superego, is a garrison. It is the responsibility of psychoanalysis, Freud writes towards the conclusion of *Civilisation and its Discontents*, to lessen the demands of the superego. This is psychoanalysis opposed to totalitarian authority, whether in the psyche or the State. Or, as Joan Copjec writes: "[m]oral order is established, according to psychoanalysis, not in obedience to some reasonable or compassionate command to sacrifice our pleasure to the state but because we recoil before the violence and obscenity of the superego's encitement to *jouissance*, to a boundless and aggressive enjoyment."[162] We have come some distance from Freud's position, in "'Civilized' Sexual Morality and Modern Nervous Illness", where the ill effects of culture are found to be concentrated in what it does to sexual expression. Though Freud's later account of the discontents of civilisation is not limited to the difficulties

159. Bersani, *The Freudian Body,* 23.
160. Freud, "Why War," *SE* 22:210.
161. Freud, "Thoughts," *SE* 14:279
162. Copjec, "The Sartorial Superego," 92.

of an interpersonal sexual encounter, the sexual-libidinal remains a constitutive element in Freud's account of civilisation, and, as I suggest in the following section, vital to understanding psychoanalysis in India.

Polymorphous Perversity

The colonial psychoanalysts I discuss in the following chapter share with Freud the idea that the sexual was a privileged site of interpretation, but theirs was a narrow interpretation of the sexual, and one endowed with normative content. Nevertheless, questions of sexuality that surface in their writing both confuse and disturb its intent. Their attempt to navigate the sexual in writing, despite all attempts at containment, troubles the project of offering an account of a masterful self in full possession of itself. In psychoanalysis, the concept of the sexual not only indicates that aspect of the subject that is most difficult to master, as I argue in the following discussion of Freud's writings on sexuality, it is also a point in the theory that offers the greatest resistance to being tied to a normative account of the subject. Or as Freud puts it: "[i]t is precisely in the sphere of sexual life that we encounter peculiar, indeed presently insoluble, difficulties as soon as we try to draw a sharp line to distinguish mere variations within the physiological range from pathological symptoms."[163] This is crucial in a colonial context, as analysts speaking in the name of psychoanalysis, or cultural commentators drawing upon a psychological vocabulary, often used adjectives such as 'infantile', or 'perverse' as a way of pathologizing the native population and legitimating colonial authority. Attempts to put together a psychoanalytically informed colonial discourse, of which we will encounter many iterations in this thesis, are, I suggest, undermined from within by the treatment the categories of childhood and perversion receive in Freud's writing, notably the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. At the same time, Freud's arguments in this text also provide a vigorous antidote to the language of evolutionary condemnation in which 'natives' were described by colonial anthropologists, especially the Naga tribes I discuss in Chapter 4, or the dismissal of anti-colonial political organising as 'perverse', which I have the opportunity to discuss in Chapters 2 and 5.

163. Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality: The 1905 Edition*, trans. Ulrike Kistner, eds. Phillipe Van Haute and Hermann Westerink (London: Verso, 2016). 21-22.

Freud begins his *Three Essays* by challenging the contemporary idea of a "genital drive", finding that such assumptions of a natural heterosexual genital sexuality "abound in errors, inaccuracies, and hastily drawn conclusions."[164] Instead, he argues that the range of practices and objects through which people negotiate their sexuality suggests a sexual drive that does not have a specific aim and is not genitally focussed.[165] Further, the sexual drive has no proper object, the object and the drive are "merely soldered together."[166] It is a discussion of the category of perversion that allows Freud to arrive at these conclusions, but in doing so he transforms how perversion is understood. Freud finds that the acts and objects designated as perverse share far too much with ordinarily acceptable acts to merit conceptual distinction. Their categorisation as perverse owes itself to a feeling of disgust which is "purely conventional", because "a man who passionately kisses the lips of a pretty girl may be disgusted at the idea of using her toothbrush, even though there are no grounds for supposing that his own oral cavity, for which he feels no disgust, is any cleaner than that of the girl."[167] Rejecting disgust as a basis for theorisation, Freud then finds that seemingly unconventional object-choices, such as a slipper or a lock of hair, which would be designated as fetishistic, share with culturally celebrated love the feature of the "psychologically necessary overvaluation of the sexual object, which inevitably extends to everything that is associated with it."[168] As Arnold I Davidson puts it in his consummate reading of the *Three Essays*: "[t]he notion of appropriateness has lost all of its conceptual plausibility because the concept of the sexual drive is detached from that of a natural object and aim."[169]

Freud offered this account of the sexual drive against the backdrop of an assumed natural, normal function of the sexual instinct amongst nineteenth century sexologists and psychiatrists. In their writing there had been "a virtual explosion of medical discussions about the sexual perversions."[170] Davidson points out that the

164. Freud, *Three Essays* [1905], 1.
165. On the drive (Trieb)/ instinct (Instinkt) distinction, Arnold I Davidson writes: "since many of Freud's contemporaries, among them, Krafft-Ebing, used *Trieb*, Freud's terminology did not constitute a break with previously established terminology. It is not the introduction of a new word that signals Freud's originality but rather the fact that *Sexualtrieb* is not the same concept as that of the sexual instinct." Arnold I Davidson, "How to do the History of Psychoanalysis: A Reading of Freud's 'Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality'" *Critical Inquiry* 13, No. 2, (Winter 1987): 265.
166. Freud, *Three Essays* [1905], 11.
167. Freud, *Three Essays* [1905], 14
168. Freud, *Three Essays* [1905], 16.
169. Davidson, "How to," 271.
170. Davidson, "How to," 258

prevailing discussions of perversion, understood as the disturbance of a sexual instinct, were based on an "*unargued unanimity* both on the fact that this instinct does have a natural function and on what that function is."[171] Freud's intervention was, in Davidson's evocative phrasing, "conceptually devastating".[172] Instead of seeing perversions as the diseases of the sexual drive, Freud finds them illustrative of the drive's fundamental nature. Instead of pathologising perversion, he locates it at the centre of human sexuality: "there is no healthy person who does not have any so-called perverse addition to the normal sexual aim, and the universality of this finding is sufficient reason to show how inappropriate it is to use the word 'perversion' as a term of reproach."[173] In fact, later in the *Three Essays* Freud will describe the infant as "polymorphously perverse", once again underscoring the universality of perversion.[174]

The objectless, aim bereft character of the sexual drive is further underscored by Freud's account of infantile sexuality. As Phillipe van Haute and Herman Westerink write in their Introduction to the English translation of Freud's *Three Essays*, "the adjective 'polymorphous' underscores the idea that infantile sexuality is not structured by any innate principle or order."[175] The activity that Freud takes as the model for infantile sexuality, "sensual sucking", doesn't have a proper object: "A part of the lip itself, the tongue, or any other random part of the skin within reach — even the big toe—may be taken as the object upon which sucking is carried out."[176] This description of the infant's satisfaction in sucking allows Freud to discuss two other aspects of sexuality: that it can take be autoerotic, that is, the infant can take satisfaction in a part of its own body, and that it seems to repeat a previous pleasure, that of sucking at the mother's breast. Yet what was once connected to an other, and to a function (feeding), is capable of exceeding, and doing without both the original object and purpose in its quest for, and attainment of pleasure. Here we can see, in the account of the infants' sensual sucking, the seeds of the key psychoanalytic concepts of narcissism and repetition, which will be crucial to Freud's account of the human subject. Given the key explanatory position that Freud accords infantile

171. Davidson, "How to," 260.
172. Davidson, "How to," 265.
173. Freud, *Three Essays* [1905], 21.
174. Freud, *Three Essays* [1905], 51; 83.
175. Phillipe van Haute and Herman Westerink, "Introduction" to Freud, Three Essays (1905), p. xxxiii
176. Freud, *Three Essays* [1905], 41.

sexuality, it would be absurd to levy the charge of infantilism against someone, just as it would be to use perversion as an insult, but this is precisely what colonial psychoanalysts did in their writings about 'native' populations.

Yet Freud does not leave his account of sexuality here. The *Three Essays* are an exploration of the multiple, proliferating manifestations of sexuality, testament to the inventiveness of the sexual drive, but they are also a narrative of loss. Freud is also concerned with how the polymorphous sexuality of the infant comes to be restricted and channelled. Freud's account of the body, to borrow Joan Copjec's phrase, "privileges the voluptuary dimension of corporeality."[177] It is a question for him how the polymorphously perverse infant, sensually sucking away, turns in an adult with a limited repertoire of sexual possibility. The text of the *Three Essays* was subject to major revisions, with Freud adding many new sections to the 1905 edition. The contradictory, divided nature of Freud's writing, which has been a thread in my exploration of Freud, is fundamental to this text which is marked by what Leo Bersani has called a "beneficient discursive stammering".[178] In later editions of the *Three Essays,* Freud added a section on "Phases in the Development of Sexual Organization" in which he writes that the infantile sexual organisation transforms into "the so-called normal sexual life of the adult" where "the acquisition of pleasure is placed at the service of the function of reproduction", a "single erogenous zone" dominates, and a particular sexual act is sought with a sexual object that is not one's own body.[179] He also identifies stages in sexual development: the pregenital organisations, ambivalence, and dual-phasic object choice.

Various commentators on the *Three Essays* have questioned the 'teleological' account of sexual stages added by Freud to his account of human sexuality. Leo Bersani has drawn attention to the conflict in Freud between the two models of sexuality, the infantile and the teleological. It is clear that Freud never gives up the infantile model of sexuality, indeed that it occupies a privileged place in his account of human sexuality: "In speaking of the difficulty which psychoanalysis has in defining sexuality, Freud writes—in spite of himself?—as if infantile sexuality *were*

177. Joan Copjec, "Narcissism, Approached Obliquely," in *Imagine There's No Woman: Ethics and Sublimation* (Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 2002), 51.
178. Bersani, *The Freudian Body,* 31.
179. Freud, "Three Essays on Sexual Theory" in *The Psychology of Love* trans. Shaun Whiteside (London: Penguin, 2006), 172.

sexuality itself'.[180] The editors and translator of the 1905 edition identify it as version more aligned to theories of feminism and a subversive account of sexuality. Yet I think it is possible, without compromising the subversive potential of acknowledging the polymorphous perversity at the heart of every human subject, to be interested in the question of how this inventive, insistent sexual drive allows itself to be channeled and marshalled, and whether such attempts to direct it are ever fully successful. Freud's later additions to the *Three Essays* introduce the problems of identity and authority, which, as I noted in my Introduction, are germane to an exploration of psychoanalysis in a colonial context.

The problem of authority links Freud's thinking on civilisation to his accounts of childhood sexuality. Though Freud offered many variations on the trajectory of the Oedipus complex, he always acknowledged the mother was the primary object and attachment for the infant. Yet it is the fate of each infant to realise that there are rivals for the mother's affection, primarily the father, and that it is not capable of satisfying the mother. This experience of rivalry and of the self's inadequacy is intimately associated with how the body comes to be inhabited and sexuated. Freud writes that the boy fears a loss that the stronger rival, the father, will carry out, while the girl begins by accepting her loss and seeking compensation for it, in the hope that the father may provide her with a substitute for what she thinks she has lost. The penis comes to symbolize, for the boy, the object that can be taken away, and for the girl, the lost object. While it is beyond the scope of my discussion here to go into the details of this account, this summary already shows that all infants irrespective of where they line up in accordance with sexual difference, form a relationship to authority—whether one of fearing it, or of soliciting it, and that this shapes their identity as masculine or feminine subjects.

Fantasies of authority were involved in how psychoanalysis was institutionalised in Europe, and established in India. Further, psychoanalysis in India was involved in questions of administration, empire, and the formation of a nation, and its history is bound up with how structures of power were negotiated and challenged. As we will see, colonial authority often presented itself as a *paternal* authority, frequently as a matter of course. This persistence of the paternal in the administrative, the familial in the governmental is illuminated by Freud's writings,

180. Bersani, *The Freudian Body,* 32.

which explore the question of authority, both in the childhood nursery and in the political rally. In the historical discussions in the following chapters and the subsequent account of Freud's text on group psychology, questions of identity and authority accompany each other.

Family Romance: Leaders and Fathers

In his essay "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego", Freud refused the hypothesis of a "herd instinct" or "group mind", suggesting instead that the psychology of "man as a member of a race, of a nation, of a caste, of a profession, of an institution or as a component part of crowd of people who have been organized into a group at some particular time for some definite purpose" was intimately linked to situations where the influence was exercised by a single person, or a small number of people who were of immense importance.[181] Libidinal ties are common to both these situations, and according to Freud, were at the heart of the constitution of a group. Yet what allows these ties to be organized into a group in which the usual aggression towards the neighbour is absent? In a group, individuals "behave as though they were uniform, tolerate the peculiarities of its other members, equate themselves with them, and have no feelings of aversion towards them."[182] Freud's attempt to investigate this curious state of affairs leads him into an extended discussion of identification.

Identification, Freud writes, is the earliest expression of "an emotional tie", involving a kind of swallowing of the object, thus combining assimilation and annihilation.[183] He then defines a group as "a number of individuals who have put one and the same object in the place of their ego ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego."[184] Yet something else is required to bring about this situation. Describing the Church and Army, Freud finds that to hold itself together, a group needs a leader "who loves all the individuals with an equal love".[185] Freud arrives at his definition of a group after discussing the states of being in love, and hypnosis. In both states, he suggests, what is prominent is a

181. Freud, "Group Psychology," *SE* 18:70.
182. Freud, "Group Psychology," *SE* 18:102.
183. "It behaves like a first, *oral* phase of the organization of the libido. In which the object that we long for and prize is assimilated by eating and is in that way annihilated as such." Freud, "Group Psychology," *SE* 18:105.
184. Freud, "Group Psychology," *SE* 18:116.
185. Freud, "Group Psychology," *SE* 18:94.

compromise of the ability to apprehend reality. Freud links both these states to the psychological state of a group, assimilating the figure of the beloved and the hypnotist to the leader of a group. In the situations of being in love, as part of a group, or in hypnosis, reality may be filtered, distorted or constructed by the libidinal situation—the love object comes to occupy the place of the ego ideal. Bound by intense ties to the leader, (Freud suggests that the place of the leader can be taken by a leading idea) and to other members, the psyche of the individual in a group is "impoverished".[186] So, when the group collapses, there is panic. Yet authority brings forth ambivalence—the leader-father both provides and prohibits. Given that the members of a group orient themselves through the leader, and the dissolution of the group releases panic, this ambivalence is rarely acknowledged within the group.

Freud returns to his mythology of the primal horde in his essay on group psychology. In his narrative, the primal father prevented the sons from satisfying their sexual desires so that these could be rechanneled into emotional ties with him and with the rest of the group: "He forced them, so to speak, into group psychology. His sexual jealousy and intolerance became in the last resort the causes of group psychology."[187] Returning to a description of present day conditions, Freud writes: "[w]e have seen that with an army and Church this contrivance is the illusion that the leader loves all of the individuals equally and justly. But this is simply an idealistic remodeling of the state of affairs in the primal horde, where all of the sons knew that they were equally *persecuted* by the primal father, and *feared* him equally."[188]

The question of the leader continued to trouble Freud till the end of his life. He returned to it in *Moses and Monotheism,* in his discussion of Moses, and in his attempt to sketch a portrait of 'The Great Man', someone who influences his fellow men with his personality, and with an idea that he puts forward. Freud writes:

> We know that in the mass of mankind there is a powerful need for an authority who can be admired, before whom one bows down, by whom one is ruled and perhaps even ill- treated. We have learnt from the psychology of individual men what the origin is of this need of the masses. It is a longing for the father felt by everyone from his childhood onwards, for the same

186. Freud, "Group Psychology," *SE* 18:95.
187. Freud, "Group Psychology," *SE* 18:124.
188. Freud, "Group Psychology," *SE* 18:125.

> father whom the hero of legend boasts he has overcome. And now it may begin to dawn on us that all the characteristics with which we equipped the great man are paternal characteristics, and that the essence of great men for which we vainly searched lies in this conformity. The decisiveness of thought, the strength of will, the energy of action are part of the picture of a father—but above all the autonomy and independence of the great man, his divine unconcern which may grow into ruthlessness.[189]

The 'authority by whom one is ill-treated' immediately calls forth the description of the superego in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, and Freud attributes to the great man the part of the superego in group psychology.[190] Here, Freud continues to use the father as the model for the leader, as he does in *Group Psychology* when he turns to the hypothesis of the primal horde to test out his theory of groups. If a group shares, as Freud argues, both an ideal and a superego, then this would go some way in helping us understand why collectives can be so violent. The hatred that arises in a group towards the leader as prohibiting father needs to be routinely excised so that the group can keep the leader (which occupies the place of the ideal), and therefore itself, in place. Yet since the leader, the shared ego ideal, is also the superego, all the brutality that Freud attributed to the superego is sanctioned, even demanded by the leader.

This is not an optimistic picture of collective life, or of parental authority. This is precisely why Freud's diagnosis of leader-dependence in groups holds true not just for armies or churches but also sheds light on colonialism. In the following chapters, we will have a chance to discuss how colonial rule was not only presented in terms of parental authority, but also as allegiance to a leading idea: whether progress or civilisation. Freud not only queries these ideas, he also shows the violence that can be released when collective life is organized around them (for that matter, around any ideal). I would like to suggest that the mythology of the primal horde, wherein all authority is concentrated in a single figure, was not so much a description of present day 'primitive' societies, as a construction in analysis, in

189. Freud, "Moses and Monotheism," *SE* 23:109-110.
190. Freud writes: "since the great man himself operates by virtue of his similarity to the father, there is no need to feel surprise if in group psychology the role of the super-ego falls to him." Freud, "Moses and Monotheism," *SE* 23:117.

which Freud attempts to understand the malaise of European political organization—both within and outside Europe.

Yet Freud "never *criticized* 'group psychology'" writes Mikkel Borch Jacobsen, because he saw it as "the very essence of society".[191] Freud's description of the attraction towards totalitarian authority is compelling, illuminating, but he also seems drawn towards such a structure of authority. In *Civilization and its Discontents* he can only imagine civilisation organized around a leader: "there are difficulties attaching to the nature of civilization which will not yield to any attempt at reform. […] the bonds of a society are chiefly constituted by the identification of its members with one another, while individuals of the leader type do not acquire the importance that should fall to them in the formation of a group."[192] Borch Jacobsen also reminds us that Freud, in "Why War" wrote that people were innately, inevitably grouped into leaders and followers.

In his essay "Family Romances", Freud suggested that we like to construct fantasies in which we learn that our 'real' parents are exalted and powerful persons, from whom we have somehow been separated and handed over to our all too ordinary parents. These fantasies usually concern the father, as his relation to the child is more difficult to establish than the mother's. However, Freud tells us, in constructing these stories we are only reaching back to a time when our own parents did indeed seem all powerful and awe-inspiring: "the happy, vanished days when his father seemed to him the noblest and strongest of men and his mother the dearest and loveliest of women."[193] Borch Jacobsen points out that Freud himself was keen to occupy the position of group-leader in the institutional history of psychoanalysis, participating in and constructing a family romance of himself as father-leader. And yet it is the myth of the primal father itself that presents the opportunity for the dissolution of such a posture of authority. For, as Borch Jacobsen reminds us, the authority of this primal father is retrospective, that is, it is the remorse that is felt at his killing which institutes the social bond. This is a vision of society held together, not by a totalitarian leader, but by shared acknowledgement of criminality, and a mourning of the past.

---

191. Mikkel Borch Jacobsen, "The Freudian Subject, from Politics to Ethics," *October* 39, (Winter: 1986): 118-119. See also Mikkel Borch Jacobsen, *The Freudian Subject* trans. Catherine Porter (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).
192. Freud, "Civilisation and its Discontents," *SE* 21:115-116.
193. Freud, "Family Romances," *SE* 9, 241.

Ancestors and Ambivalence

In his essay "The Unconscious" [1915], Freud wrote that "the contents of the unconscious may be compared to an aboriginal population in the mind."[194] Here, Freud sounds remarkably like the *nganga* (healer) John Chavafambira, the subject of Wulf Sachs' study *Black Hamlet* (1937). Chavafambira healed people by communicating with his ancestors, who were voices to whom he could speak, and listen. I have tried to show that in Freud's work, there is a remarkable affinity between the ethical dimension of psychoanalysis, and the figure of the primitive. A reading of Freud for colonial history, then, is not in spite of what Freud says about the primitive, rather, it is routed through this figure.

In his seminar *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, Jacques Lacan discusses the ethical act of Antigone, heroine of Sophocles' play. Her brother Polynices, declared an enemy of the City, has been "left unwept, unburied, a lovely treasure for birds that scan the field and feast to their heart's content."[195] Adamant that he be mourned and accorded the rituals due to the dead, Antigone stands up to the City, at the penalty of death. Walled alive in her tomb for performing the burial rites of her brother, Antigone speaks:

> "Never, I tell you,
> if I had been the mother of children
> or if my husband died, exposed and rotting—
> I'd never have taken this ordeal upon myself,
> Never defied our people's will. What law,
> You ask, do I satisfy with what I say?
> A husband dead there may have been another.
> A child by another too, if I had lost the first.
> But mother and father both lost in the halls of Death,
> No brother could ever spring to light again.
> For this law alone I held you first in honor."[196]

194. Freud, "The Unconscious," *SE* 14, 37.
195. Sophocles, *Antigone*, trans. Robert Fagles (London: Penguin Classics, 2015), 4.
196. Sophocles, *Antigone*, 42.

Lacan points out that "[o]ver the centuries the reasoning found in that extraordinary justification has always left people uncertain" and that even Goethe expressed the wish that these lines be found out to be a later addition to Sophocles' play.[197] Yet, as Lacan points out, it is not simply that Antigone's brother is irreplaceable. As the son of Oedipus and Jocosta, he is the son of an unfortunate, criminal alliance. Her sister Ismene reminds Antigone of the criminality of their parents: "think how our own father died, hated" and "then mother…mother and wife, both in one".[198] It is this dimension of atrocity that Lacan identifies as the family *Atè*, writing: "Antigone chooses to be purely and simply the being of the criminal as such […] Antigone perpetuates, eternalizes, immortalizes that *Atè*."[199] Like Freud's primitive, Antigone mourns for the enemy of the city. Like the primitive mourning by the body of the dead enemy, she maintains her relationship with her ancestors, mourning and attending to what is criminal, in herself and another.

197. Jacques Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis,* trans. Dennis Porter (New York: W.W. Norton 1997), 255.
198. Sophocles, Antigone, 5.
199. Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis,* 283.

Chapter Two

Know thy Neighbour?

And another thing. I did not want to know this thing, but I did know all the same.
-Deborah Levy, *Things I Don't Want To Know*

A young man sat in Freud's house, looking at papers and talking. He felt somewhat concerned that the best part of lunch at his hotel would be gone by the time he got back, but he felt the desire to linger. He picked up his hat, noting that it was a nice one, and then felt uncertain about how to put it on—he turned the front of the rim up, then down. He put the hat down and then started talking, only to feel, again, that he should be leaving. He looked for his hat, but couldn't find it. The hat he saw now was shabby, he couldn't think of it as his. And Mrs Freud was saying something about meat, asking him whether he ate much of it, saying something about meat once a day. He thought that this must be a healthy regulation somehow connected to the Jewish religion, though he didn't think the Freuds were practising Jews…

The year was 1921, the Freuds seemed to be in Simla, and Lieutenant Colonel Claud Daly woke up from his dream in the Chief Commissioner's Province of Balochistan in British India.[200] Balochistan was not an easy posting. Daly was posted in Quetta, close to the border with Afghanistan. This was an uneasy frontier, and the British had never quite been able to consolidate their influence there, settling instead for a tenuous acceptance of their authority by the frontier populations. This acceptance was secured by regular payments to the tribes in which the frontier populations were organised, as well as armed expeditions against those tribes that refused to acknowledge British authority. British forays into neighbouring

200. Claud Dangar Daly (b. 1884 New Zealand, d. 1950 London). For biographical sources on Daly see Hartnack, *Psychoanalysis in Colonial India.* For a bibliography of Daly's published work see M.J. Lupton and J.R. Lupton, "Annotated Bibliography of Claude Dagmar Daly (1884-1950)," *American Imago* 47, (1990):81-91. My focus here is on Daly's journals. These are detailed records of his dreams and his analysis of them. The diaries, in sixteen volumes, range from 1921-1934, with some entries from later years, till about 1938. The pages are unnumbered and the writing is often unclear, often making it difficult to establish the exact date of a diary entry. They are located in the C.D. Daly Collection, Archives of the British Psychoanalytical Society, London. Quotations from the diaries will be referred to as 'Diaries', followed by the date where this is known, and then the reference number in the Daly collection.

Afghanistan had always been spectacular failures, and so the bordering mountains had come to be seen as the 'scientific frontier' for India's defence.[201]

Freud theorised the unconscious as a realm where contraries exist side by side, where there are no barriers, no boundaries and no sense of time. In Quetta, in the fraught and tenuously held borderlands of British India, in a political and social landscape marred by divisions and boundaries, Claud Daly conducted his engagement with psychoanalysis. It is my argument in this chapter that he could only do so as a form of mastery, that is by trying to submit his unconscious to conscious knowledge. Dreams or fantasies had to be interpreted, so that they could be fully known and mastered, yet the diaries are also witness to how psychoanalysis thwarts attempts to align it to a project of mastery. Writing in pencil on the pages of army standard issue registers, Daly would write out dreams, followed by page upon page of his associations and interpretations. Sometimes, part of the diary would have been used for military training exercises, and then flipped over and turned upside down to begin a record of the dreams. His diaries take us to a place where the borders between history, politics and psychoanalysis are thin—if present at all.

An officer in the Supply and Transport Corps, Daly had been introduced to psychoanalysis during the Great War, when he was sent to Ernest Jones for treatment of shell shock.[202] It was Jones who sent him to Freud for analysis, hoping in this way to supplement Freud's income, which was a concern at the time due to post war currency devaluation.[203] Neither Freud nor Jones had a very high opinion of Daly. Jones called him "rather an ass"[204] and Freud referred to him as "that fool Daly".[205]

---

201. See Alan Warren, *Waziristan, The Faqir of Ipi, and the Indian Army: The North West Frontier Revolt of 1936-37* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
202. We know from his diaries that Daly had an analysis with Jones during the war, which he hoped to continue once the war came to an end. In 1917, in a letter to Freud, Jones mentioned a patient sent to him by the India Office for treatment: "our India office has just submitted to me officially as a test of the value of ψα, the case of a valuable officer, whom they consider incurable; I have been treating him for 5 ½ months and am hopeful of the result, which if successful would be important.". This patient is not named, but is most likely Daly, as this seems to correspond with the dates of Daly's analysis with Jones. Jones to Freud, 15 January 1917, *Freud Jones Correspondence*, 321.
203. Jones mentions Daly in a letter written in January 1920: "I told him you would charge him two guineas. He has a year's leave from the Army, and will find it cheaper to live in Vienna than in London." Jones to Freud, 25 January 1920, *Freud Jones Correspondence*, 364. Freud replied: "[y]ou are providing well for my medical income." *Freud Jones Correspondence*, 368. Freud's medical income was discussed with Jones in letters dating from this period.
204. Jones to Freud, 25 January 1920, *Freud Jones Correspondence*, 364.
205. Freud to Jones. 12 October 1920. *Freud Jones Correspondence*, 393.

Still, Daly remained determined to become an analyst after he had "served his term in India".[206]

After analyses with Freud and Jones, Daly went to Budapest for an analysis with Sandor Ferenczi. Freud and Ferenczi also discussed their post-war financial troubles in their letters to each other. Freud mentioned how his income relied on the analysands sent by Jones: "but what will happen if Jones can't send any more?" he wrote.[207] Later, Daly was sent to Ferenczi for an analysis. He is usually mentioned in the letters of his analysts in relation to money—at first the post war financial troubles, later the money he asked one analyst to pass on to another. Both Daly and his money were much exchanged amongst his analysts. Reading the letters that they wrote, it is difficult not to notice their lack of concern for him as a patient. He seems to have been a blessing in that he was a source of income, and an inconvenience as an analysand.

Daly's bond with them was much more intensely emotional. All three of his analysts were important figures in his psychic life, and his diaries abound with passionate and involved accounts of them. One of Daly's many anxieties was the lack of regard of his analysts for him—and this was mixed up with his complicated relationships with his parents and siblings.[208] Far away from the European capitals in which he met his analysts, over a period of ten years, Daly's writing suggests he was tying himself up in knots trying to think of ways in which he could secure their love, please them and have his ideas recognised by them. When he left military service in India he went to Vienna for analysis with Freud, and subsequently started practicing as an analyst.[209] Like H.D., who wrote about her fantasies of being Freud's heir,

---

206. Freud to Jones, 28 January 1921. *Freud Jones Correspondence*, 405.
207. Sigmund Freud to Sándor Ferenczi, 15 March 1920, *The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sándor Ferenczi* Volume 2, trans. Peter Hoffer, ed. E. Brabant, E. Falzedar, P. Giampieri-Deutsch (London: Harvard University Press, 2000), 12. Henceforth referred to as *Freud Ferenczi Correspondence.*
208. Daly wrote: "[a]nalysis with him [Freud] did not seem successful, I seemed taken up with other interests all the time, the chief reason was I think the off hand way in which he shook hands with me, as though he did because he had to do it but disliked me all the time whereas both Jones and Ferenczi met me with a pleasant smile of welcome always which in my case established an 'en rapport' […]" He goes on to write about how he always worried about his parents' disapproval. Diaries, 15 May 1931, P06/B/08.
209. In his obituary of Claud Daly, John Rickman gives the years of Daly's second analysis with Freud as 1935-1936. Daly sometimes mentions a patient in the last of his diaries, but since these last diaries are not chronologically organized or clearly dated it is difficult to establish exactly when Daly started seeing patients, and where. He is not mentioned in Freud's correspondence with Jones from this period. It is worth bearing in mind that though Rickman's obituary is one of the few biographical sources on Daly, it is also a source with obvious errors. Rickman dates Daly's first analysis with Freud to 1925, something that is contradicted both by the Freud-Jones correspondence and Daly's

Daly's diaries, as I discuss in this chapter, also express his involvement in questions of succession and transgression in relation to Freud, both as analyst and as founding figure, and to the institution of psychoanalysis.

In the Introduction to this thesis, I offered an account of how a fantasy about 'India' came into circulation in psychoanalytic networks, and the institutional and theoretical consequences of the desire to establish psychoanalysis in what Freud and Jones referred to as a 'faraway' location. To explore these questions further, in this chapter Claud Daly's diaries are read alongside the autobiography of Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill, a doctor and Superintendent of the Ranchi European Mental Hospital. The work of these two analysts, who spent considerable parts of their life in India, allows us to observe not just the fantasmatic elements of the location 'India', but also the ways in which the historical specificity of the location and its political situation confronted these analysts.

Berkeley Hill's autobiography, titled *All Too Human*, discusses his family life and career, as well as his service in the First World War. Both Claud Daly and Berkeley Hill were members of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society, and reading their autobiographical writing allows us to ask what form of psychoanalysis could be sustained by these two members of the colonial administration in British India. Daly and Berkeley Hill are linked by the time they spent in India, as well as through other social and professional connections. They both knew Ernest Jones. Berkeley Hill made his acquaintance sometime after the Boer war, when Jones shared a house on Harley Street with Wilfred Trotter. He was introduced to psychoanalysis by Ernest Jones, after he had already developed an interest in psychiatry during his time studying in Göttingen. Claud Daly, who was a teenaged soldier in the Boer War (he enlisted by lying about his age), would not make Jones's acquaintance for another decade, until the next war he fought in. In the First World War, Daly served on the Western front in Europe, and Berkeley Hill in East Africa.

In the work of both analysts, the reader encounters subjectivities shaped by colonialism and war, as well as the social codes and expectations of the time. Considering their writing allows us to observe the fascinating interplay between the demands and effects on the psyche of large scale social phenomena, and how these

---

own diaries. This is an interesting mistake, as both Rickman and Daly began their analysis with Freud in the same year, both having been sent there by Ernest Jones. John Rickman, "Claud Dangar Daly Lt-Col (Ret) 1884-1950," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 31, (1950): 290-291.

interact with, and impact the internal imperatives of psychic processes, a question that accompanies each of the chapters in this thesis. One can observe both the constraints and the room for manoeuvre and witness how political and historical conditions became internal to the psyche—in the construction of fantasy and the direction of desire— and yet how there was a uniquely personal way of coming to be within, and responding to, these historical conditions.

In the previous chapter, I discussed how Freud's deliberations, in *Civilisation and its Discontents*, on the injunction to 'love thy neighbour as thyself' show its turbulent underside and prevent it from being a guarantor of ethical action. In this chapter, the question of the relationship to the neighbour undergoes further torsion. Claud Daly and Berkeley Hill's writing presents a scenario where 'civilisation' was the prerogative of only a few people amongst many, and the injunction to love the neighbour was seemingly suspended. These psychoanalytic accounts of British India therefore refract the difficulties Freud faced in finding a stable ethical ground for civilisation, through the prism of a colonial history in which they themselves were entangled.

Today, the psychoanalytic articles that Berkley Hill and Claud Daly wrote would be called racist. But if we look at their autobiographical writing, we find that this 'racism' was not a unitary thing. I think it is important to pay attention to the ways in which they were divided inside themselves, at war with their own opinions. These contradictions help us see how fragile a position of colonial mastery may be, while at the same time acknowledging that this very fragility and contradiction was resolved through epistemic and physical violence towards an other. In a colonial setting, claims to superior knowledge were often the justification for domination, just as sexuality was a site for both the consolidation and the undoing of a position of mastery. As we will see, the colonial situation, as it is negotiated in these analysts' writing, knots the problem of the relationship to an other with questions of sexuality and knowledge.

'A Room Suitable for Psychoanalytic Treatment'

In 1918, amidst much discussion as to who or what was meant by 'European', inmates of the Lunatic asylums at Behrampore were transferred to the newly

constructed Ranchi Central Lunatic Asylum for Europeans.[210] A year later, Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill of the Indian Medical Service was appointed as the Superintendent of the Hospital, a post that he occupied till his retirement in 1934. This is how Berkeley Hill described the asylum:

> Vast sums of money had been expended in erecting this fantastic asylum, but nowhere more wastefully than in constructing a wall sixteen feet high around the whole area, that is, around eighteen acres! One result of this useless expenditure was that when the time came to realise that lunatics wear clothes, eat and drink and like to sleep on beds, and that beds connote bedding, there was hardly any money left to provide even the barest necessities.[211]

His opinion was shared by J.V. Jameson, who wrote a letter to *The Statesman* in 1920, condemning the state of the asylum: "[i]s it to be wondered at that a man accustomed to the ordinary amenities and comforts of life, whose brain has been affected by illness or accident, should imagine that he has been put into jail for some unknown offence, when he finds himself confined to a small grey prison cell? For a prison cell it is in all but name, its door with a barred opening covered by a wooden slide to enable the keepers to see in."[212] In his letter, he held the Government of India responsible for this dismal state of affairs, and not the asylum authorities, which in

---

210. It was reported that:

> The outstanding event of the triennium is the opening of the Ranchi Central Lunatic Asylum for Europeans and the transfer to it of European and Anglo-Indian inmates of the Bhawanipur and Berhampore Lunatic Asylums towards the latter part of the year 1918. […] Although the matter of selection of transferees was carefully gone into in communication with Government before their actual transfer, the Bihar and Orissa Government, shortly after the arrival of the lunatics at Ranchi, protested against the action of this Government in having sent patients who, it was alleged, were Indian Christians, and not Europeans, for whom alone the Ranchi Asylum was intended. This protest was accompanied by a proposal to re-transfer 31 patients to Bengal, on the ground that they were not strictly Europeans. Subsequently, in October 1919, the Government of India laid down a clear definition of the class of patients who should be considered to be eligible for admission into the Ranchi European Lunatic Asylum. They ruled that Europeans and Americans would be eligible, including persons of mixed blood whose habits are those of Europeans, and that the term European should be held to include persons born in the British Colonies and dominions and their descendants being either purely white or of mixed blood, subject to the same proviso as to European habits. In consequence of this ruling only 3, out of the 31 patients proposed to be re-transferred, were found to be taken back to Behrampore. They have, however, not yet arrived.

Lieutenant Colonel F. O'Kinealy, *Triennial Report on the Lunatic Asylums in Bengal for the years 1918,1919 and 1920*. Printed document, File no. 96/3, Home Department, Jails 1921-1922, National Archives of India [NAI], New Delhi.

211. Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill, *All too Human* (London: Peter Davies, 1939), 244.

212. J.V. Jameson, "THE RANCHI ASYLUM: To the Editor of 'The Statesman'", *The Statesman,* 19 September, 1920.

his opinion were doing whatever they could given the meagre resources that were sanctioned them, or, in Jameson's words, "the usual official lethargy and inertia, and, above all, by that official outlook in financial matters which cannot get beyond the comparison of this year's figures with last year's."[213]

Reading Berkeley Hill's annual reports on the asylum (the institution was renamed a mental hospital in 1922), one gets the sense that every new tile that was installed in the building had to be prised from a stone wall of bureaucratic neglect and miserliness.[214] The funds that were sanctioned seemed to have been determined by a toss-up between the imperative to spend as little money as possible and the desire to preserve some sort of benign public reputation which had been compromised by letters such as the one Jameson wrote. An administrator such as Berkeley Hill was a bit of a nuisance, and the annual reports on him by his superiors attest to this: "[h]is keeness for the improvement of his hospital and the advancement of psychiatry often led him into opposition with authority of which he is not very tolerant" and, "[i]t is always difficult to report with fairness on this officer. His abilities have frequently been referred to. [...] It is his impulsiveness which makes trouble and he should sleep on some of his problems before committing his views to paper."[215]

---

213. J.V. Jameson, "THE RANCHI ASYLUM: To the Editor of 'The Statesman'", *The Statesman,* 19 September, 1920.

214. See for example, this extract from a report on the Ranchi European Mental Asylum by the European Association:

> The various blocks for patients appear to be sufficiently large but it is unfortunate that the walls and floors should have all been finished in natural grey cement. This cement colour is peculiarly depressing and even the band of red paint at the top edge of the cement does not serve to break the monotony of the large area of drab grey. This is a matter of some importance as it will certainly in some cases retard the recovery of the patients. We suggest that certain rooms such as the mess rooms might have the dado painted with some good washable enamel of suitable colour; but the cells are more difficult to improve as many patients scribble on the walls and as the cement was not coloured at the time of construction it would be expensive to remove it all now and replace it with coloured. However a few single rooms primarily intended for paying patients, should certainly have the cement on the walls replaced by plain or better still decorated tiles. Even then the rooms would not compare favourably with those now being constructed at Bhowanipore Calcutta, where the rooms for paying patients are being provided with polished marble floors, glazed tile wall and low windows.

A.C. Atkinson and W.W. Kennedy, *Report to the Committee of the Calcutta Branch of the European Association Calcutta the 20th July 1920*. Printed document, File no. 88, Home Department, Jails 1921- 1922 NAI.

215. L/MIL/14/5, India Office Records and Private Papers [IORPP], London. For Hill's account of his confrontations with the administration, see *All Too Human.*

This situation of an overcrowded, understaffed and ill-maintained asylum was fairly common in Indian asylums and in other colonised countries.[216] What attracts our attention is that this is the place out of which Berkeley Hill conducted his psychoanalytic work and produced his psychoanalytic writings. Some of the articles compiled in his *Collected Papers* are mentioned in the asylum report for 1921-23. In this report on the asylum, Berkeley Hill writes that "the psychological laboratory has been finished and a room suitable for psychoanalytic treatment is at last at our disposal."[217] Despite this room having materialised (at last!), infrastructure remained lacking: "the only available place in this hospital for pathological and microscopical work is a disused lavatory measuring 7'-9"— 8'-0'." Still, Berkeley Hill remained hopeful, suggesting that if research facilities at the asylum were improved, a trained alienist from one of the European countries impoverished after the Versailles treaty may be invited to work in Ranchi.

The stressful and straitened circumstances that Berkeley Hill and his patients found themselves in sound most unlike the room described by H.D. in her memoir of Freud, her words suffused with the warmth of the old porcelain stove. Psychoanalytic treatment often presumes a room, or is assumed to take place in a room. We can perhaps ask, thinking of this absent/present room, about what might hang upon the space in which psychoanalytic treatment is practiced. We can turn again to H.D.'s analysis for a clue –she mentions her slight sense of unease when the analysis shifted to the country house where she met Freud during the summer and how the analysis never felt quite in earnest when it was carried out there. It is not surprising that patients may come to see their analyst's room as both a shelter and refuge, to use its continuity as a sort of transitional object, an object or space that allows the patient to learn that things continue to exist even when the patient is not there to see them, and yet which can be acted upon and transformed.[218]

The objects in Freud's room were placed there as much through his interest in them as through a historical colonial encounter, which led to some places being the

---

216. Sanjeev Jain and James Mills "The History of modern psychiatry in India 1858-1947" *History of Psychiatry* 12, No.48 (December 2001):431-458. See also Megan Vaughan *Curing their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness* (Cambridge: Polity Press 1991).
217. Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill *Report of the European Mental Hospital at Ranchi for the Triennium 1921-23*. Printed matter. File No. 11/II/25, Home Department, Jails 1925, NAI. All subsequent quotes in this paragraph refer to this source.
218. For a discussion of transitional objects, see Donald Winnicott "Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena" in *Playing and Reality* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 1-34.

sites where artefacts came from, and other places where collectors lived. However, these objects in the analytic room also played a part in analysis, if we are to think about how the patient being analysed may not be a contained self, but as much a composition of floating desires and associations. The continuity of the objects, as well as their unique forms offered an opportunity for containment to patients undergoing the fragmentation and diffusion of an analysis.

It would not have been easy to carry out psychoanalysis in a place like the Ranchi European Mental Hospital, which was so pressed for resources. The analyst in question, Berkeley Hill, was overworked, the patients lived in inhospitable conditions. Added to that was the widespread practice of trying to get psychiatric institutions to 'pay' – by getting the inmates to take part in the labour required to sustain the institution, and by manufacturing saleable products. Not only did Berkeley Hill find it difficult to get funds sanctioned for the hospital, he also found it difficult to find staff which would recognise the therapeutic purpose of the institution.[219] Yet he persisted, and his asylum reports included a section titled 'Psychotherapy by psychoanalysis'. He also submitted, to the *Psychoanalytic Review*, an account of his ongoing treatment of a patient at the hospital.[220] And yet, we find that instead of exploring the questions of the material obstacles faced by psychoanalysis in an ill-funded institute in a colonial country, Berkeley Hill's psychoanalytical writing seems to use psychoanalysis to diagnose and stigmatise native populations. In fact, both Berkeley Hill and Claud Daly published, in various psychoanalytic journals, articles drawing upon their experience as colonial administrators. These examined racism, attempted to illuminate some aspect of the 'native' psyche, or discussed aspects of the colonizer-colonized relationship. On a

---

219. Berkeley Hill wrote in an asylum report:

> While not wishing to depreciate the work done by Mrs. McEnnnis (Work-Mistress) and Mr. C.E. Saubolle (Work-Master), for they have both tried hard to understand a very difficult and intricate business, I must observe that neither of them has so far appreciated adequately that the main consideration is *therapy* and that output of work comes a long way after. That is to say, both the Work-Mistress and Work-Master have been too eager to get a large output of work, especially articles that attract buyers amongst visitors. The result has been that industrious and skilful patients have received more attention than refractory and idle ones—the very opposite of the procedure that should have been followed. Nevertheless, even conducted on this totally misconceived basis, the occupational therapy has achieved a very considerable success in improving the *morale* of many patients and has undoubtedly contributed to the recovery of not a few.

Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill *Report of the European Mental Hospital at Ranchi for the Triennium 1921-23*. Printed matter. File No. 11/II/25, Home Department, Jails 1925, NAI.

220. Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill "A Case of Paranoid Dissociation" *Psychoanalytic Review* 9, (1922):1-27.

first reading, the reader may be struck by the stereotyping and often casual use of psychoanalytic concepts. These works have not survived the test of time, either as psychoanalytical or anthropological inquiries. But it is precisely the contradictory, divided, or plain confused positions they take up in their writing that are of interest to us.

'Unhappy relations between English people and Indians': Berkeley Hill and Claud Daly on the Colonial Condition.

An investigation into racial prejudice, Berkeley Hill's article "The 'Color Question' from a Psychoanalytic Standpoint", tries to explain this phenomenon through two arguments—that there is a universal and ancient link between blackness and evil; and that sexual jealousy plays a part in the white man's hatred and suspicion of the black man. To illustrate his point about blackness and evil, Berkeley Hill gives several anthropological examples, from Australia, Asia, and Africa. While the psychoanalytic literature is referenced, the anthropological examples are not, making it difficult for the reader to investigate them in greater detail. This epistemic disregard for the details of the lives of non-white people is accompanied by an understanding of darker skinned people as "racially more primitive".[221] Then, touching upon an argument that Frantz Fanon would develop more than two decades later in *Black Skins, White Masks,* Berkeley Hill links colour prejudice to the sexual fantasies and anxieties of the white man.[222] Writing about lynch mobs who target black men accused of raping white women, he writes: "sexual jealousy of the negro's potency drives the white man temporarily mad, to the end that he inflicts the most horrible retributions on his unfortunate rival."[223] Yet Berkeley Hill does not question this fantasy, nor does he elaborate upon his own claim that "women, of a racially superior type are liable to become the subjects of the strongest attraction for individuals belonging to a racially more primitive type".[224]

---

221. Owen A.R. Berkeley-Hill, "The 'Color Question' From a Psychoanalytic Standpoint," *Psychoanalytic Review* 11, (1924):251.
222. See Frantz Fanon, "The Man of Colour and the White Woman" and "The So called Dependency Complex of the Colonized" in *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008) Fanon writes: "The civilized white man retains an irrational nostalgia for the extraordinary times of sexual licentiousness, orgies, unpunished rapes, and unrepressed incest. In a sense, these fantasies correspond to Freud's life instinct. Projecting his desires onto the black man, the white man behaves as if the black man actually had them." *Black Skin, White Masks*, 142-143.
223. Berkeley Hill, "Colour Question," 252.
224. Berkeley Hill, "Colour Question," 252.

The article is an uneasy combination of analyses of 'colour prejudice' combined with Berkeley Hill's own opinions about which group of people was more 'primitive' than the other. Berkeley Hill took a stand against 'colour prejudice' and condemned the Ku Klux Klan.[225] In his autobiography, written nine years after this article was published, he also wrote indignantly against the colour prejudice that led to his Hindu, Indian wife being treated unkindly: "[o]ur hostess reminded me of the type of English-woman which has done so much to bring about and maintain unhappy relations between English people and Indians. […] to think that this vulgar, ignorant and arrogant woman could presume that the non-pigmentation of her skin entitled her to treat with an all-too-obvious contumely a woman like my wife, filled me with loathing."[226] And yet, to the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* he sent articles such as "The Anal-Erotic Factor in the Religion, Philosophy and Character of the Hindus" in which he reads a variety of Hindu texts and practices as arising from the inadequate resolution of anal-erotic impulses and comes to the conclusion that the Hindus are incapable of adjusting to reality.[227]

The institution of caste is central to his analysis, as practices shaped by ideas of purity and pollution provide Berkeley Hill with evidence for his arguments: "it is the idea of 'pollution' with its concomitant [sic] creation of a section of the body politic into 'Outcastes', "shut out in their filth and poverty", that makes the Hindus unique among the other races of mankind."[228] Just as his point about the white man's sexual jealousy links him to Fanon, the discussion of caste in this essay shares with B.R. Ambedkar's *The Annihilation of Caste* its recognition of caste prejudice as the defining characteristic of Hinduism.[229] But in both articles, Berkeley Hill's writing lacks the insight and urgency of Fanon's and Ambedkar's work, their commitment to addressing injustices felt and observed. Unlike Fanon and Ambedkar, these articles by Berkeley Hill sustain assumptions of racial superiority, and an allegiance to the colonial enterprise, except in the ways in which they rebound on his own domestic life.

---

225. Berkeley Hill, "Colour Question," 246-253.
226. Berkeley-Hill, *All Too Human*, 344.
227. See also Sigmund Freud, "Character and Anal Erotism," *SE* 9.
228. Berkeley-Hill, "The Anal-Erotic Factor in the Religion, Philosophy and Character of the Hindus" *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 2, (1921):308.
229. "Hindu society as such does not exist. It is only a collection of castes." B.R. Ambedkar, "Annihilation of Caste: An Undelivered Speech" in *Annihilation of Caste* (London: Verso, 2014), 242.

In Rudyard Kipling's *From Sea to Sea,* Berkeley Hill found an illustration for "two notable characteristics of the Hindu, namely, his avariciousness and his instinct to hoard."[230] In the extract that he quotes from Kipling, the narrator, in his travels through the native-administered state of Rajputana, has encountered 'an intelligent loafer' who is convinced that the colonial 'Guv'ment' could make more money in India: "there's enough money in India to pave hell with."[231] This 'intelligent loafer' is convinced that if the 'Guv'ment' set itself to collect more taxes, it certainly could, because all 'Injians' had money stored away: "Do you ever know a native that didn't say *Garib Admi* (I'm a poor man')? They've been sayin' *Garib Admi* so long that the Guv'ment learns to believe 'em, and now they're all bein' treated as though they was paupers. I'm a pauper, an' you're a pauper—we' aven't got any thing hid in the ground—an' so's every white man in this forsaken country. But the Injian he's a rich man."[232] In this account of things, white men in India are all poor, and natives—be they servants or peasants, are wealthy because of their perpetual hoarding: "[d]oes any black man who had been in Guv'ment service go away without hundreds an' hundreds put by, and never touched?"[233]

The reader finds that this 'intelligent loafer' is of the opinion that "a hundred and fifty million pounds you could raise as easy paint if you just made these 'ere Injians understand that they had to pay and make no bones about it."[234] It was only a question of employing the right means: "if you send half a dozen swords at him and shift the thatch off of his roof, he'll pay." Both the narrator and the 'intelligent loafer' are of the opinion that native administrations are far more oppressive than the colonial government. The narrator gestures towards the distance between his views and those of the 'loafer' saying that he "dissented from him and the brutal cruelty with which his views were stated."[235] And yet he uses similar arguments to discredit those who criticise the colonial administration: "[a] year spent among native States ought to send a man back to the Decencies and the Law Courts and the Rights of the Subject with a supreme contempt for those who rave about the oppressions of our brutal bureaucracy."[236] The reader, however, cannot be sure whether the attitude

230. Berkeley-Hill, "The Anal-Erotic Factor," 330.
231. Rudyard Kipling, *From Sea to Sea*, quoted in Berkeley-Hill, "The Anal-Erotic Factor," 330.
232. Kipling, *From Sea to Sea*, quoted in Berkeley-Hill, "The Anal-Erotic Factor," 330.
233. Rudyard Kipling, *From Sea to Sea*, Vol 1 (London: Macmillan and Co, 1914), 228.
234. Kipling, *From Sea to Sea*, Vol 1: 230.
235. Kipling, *From Sea to Sea*, Vol 1: 230.
236. Kipling, *From Sea to Sea*, Vol 1: 228.

towards the native administrations is one of condemnation, or envy. Is the colonial government being praised, or chastised, for not being as exploitative as native States? It is difficult to tell. Comparing the two administrations, Kipling writes: "[a]cross the Border one feels that the country is being used, exploited, 'made to sit up,' so to speak. In our territories the feeling is equally strong of wealth 'just round the corner,' as the loafer said, of a people wrapped up in cotton-wool and ungettable."[237]

Berkeley Hill chose, as an illustration of the avariciousness of the subject race, an extract from a text that presents to the reader an account of the duplicitous, greedy nature of the native. Yet it is also a text that highlights, through the voices of the 'loafer' and the narrator, the covetousness of the white man in India. Thus, perhaps unwittingly, Kipling creates a proximity between the Englishman and the Hindu. I find that that Berkeley Hill, in his account of anal eroticism, similarly blurs the lines between English and Hindu, a distinction that he is otherwise committed to maintaining in his article. In psychoanalytic writing, the description of a neurosis, or a tendency like anal eroticism, is not a judgement. Yet Berkeley Hill sought to make it into one. He concluded his article by writing that the English had managed their anal eroticism in a manner that made them develop positive traits, such as "individualism, determination and persistence, love of order and power of organisation, competency, reliability and thoroughness, generosity, the bent towards art and good taste, the capacity for unusual tenderness, and the general ability to deal with concrete objects of the material world."[238]

It will come as no surprise that Berkeley Hill finds that the Hindus have only developed negative character traits in their response to their anal eroticism. Yet as Leo Bersani has pointed out in his discussion of anal eroticism, not only does the "plasticity of the anal drive—its nearly promiscuous availability to a variety of character traits and activities" call into question its "identification *as* an anal drive", it also "ruins definitional stability" of both the drive and the characteristics associated with it.[239] What I find remarkable about this article by Berkeley Hill are not its colonialist positions, but the way in which, despite its own reasoning, at this moment it blurs its own distinction between the English and Hindus, when this

237. Kipling, *From Sea to Sea*, Vol 1: 230-231.
238. Berkeley Hill, "The Anal Erotic Factor,", 335.
239. Leo Bersani, "Erotic Assumption: Narcissism and Sublimation in Freud" in *The Culture of Redemption* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 31.

distinction is ostensibly the whole point of the article. This, I think, is an indication that rather than being obvious or self-explanatory, there is something awry about Berkeley Hill's position of racial superiority and colonial allegiance.

Claud Daly also dealt with the question of colonization in his article "The Psychology of Revolutionary Tendencies", published in 1930 in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*. The article is divided into two sections: "The Rebellious Tendencies of the Bengalis" and "Andromeda and Perseus, The Classical Myth of Rebellion".[240] In the first section of his essay, Daly attempts to analyse the motivations of Indian 'revolutionaries', using psychoanalytical terminology to make a case for extended British rule in India. According to Daly, the Hindus, exemplified in this respect by M.K. Gandhi, believe that they can achieve their aims by "the practice of renunciation and austerities."[241] In this, writes Daly, they are like the Irish people and English suffragettes "in their attempt to break down authority and overcome rules and regulations which are in opposition to their primitive desires."[242]

If the Hindus did not already "suffer from some fixation in their development", he writes, then the Christian Europeans would not have been able to rule them.[243] Daly was confident that the Hindus would never achieve their ideals of getting rid of "age long subjection", unless there was a change in Hindu character.[244] This change, he argued, was to be brought about through psychologically informed education with a focus on the early childhood years. Any change that such measures could achieve, though, "must of necessity be an extremely gradual one, for it involves the revaluation of the ideas and principles of a race to meet their changing libidinal cathexis."[245] In the time that the Hindu people took to grow out of their 'infantile' and 'feminine' tendencies, the British government was to "act like wise parents", guiding their children to an independent existence.[246] Again, this was likely to be a very slow and drawn out process: "psycho-analysis has taught us that inhibited children, who have suffered severe traumatic experiences, need especially

240. Daly often seems to use Bengali, Indian and Hindu interchangeably, and his only source on the revolutionaries is Lord Ronaldshay's book, *The Heart of Aryavarta: A Study in the Psychology of Indian Unrest* (London: Constable and Company Limited: 1925).
241. Claud Daly, "The Psychology of Revolutionary Tendencies," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 11, (1930): 194.
242. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 194.
243. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 196.
244. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 196. Daly borrows this phrase from Ronaldshay.
245. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 196.
246. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 198.

careful handling, while the overcoming of age-long social fixations is a matter of generations, not years."[247] Daly mentions a 'trauma' but does not specify what trauma it was that necessitated such kindly parental care, leaving the reader free to identify it as the very experience of being colonised. While Daly certainly seems blind to the conceptual privileging of the 'infantile' in Freud's work, using it in his article as a term of condemnation, in his alignment of parental care with state authority he also seems to forget that a murderous ambivalence characterises the relationship to authority in Freud's writing. And yet his diaries suggest that Daly himself experienced this ambivalence in relation to the figure of Freud.

As we can observe in their writing, both Berkeley Hill and Claud Daly attempt to use a psychoanalytic vocabulary to arrive at a description or diagnosis of the psyche of their subject population. Yet the economic injustices of colonialism, and acknowledgements of the oppressiveness of the colonialist make their way back in, for example, when Daly turns his attention to the Perseus and Andromeda myth. Trying to draw an analogy between the myth and the situation in India, Daly writes: "[l]et us then substitute the British Government, the machine which grinds the life out of Mother India, for the monster."[248] Up till this point the article has steadfastly refused to admit political policies into its analysis, attempting to explain everything in terms of a psychology insulated from any smear of the social. Now it suddenly confronts the reader with an image that destabilises what Daly has said thus far. The

247. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 198.

248. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 204. Daly's main point of reference for the Perseus and Andromeda myth is its depiction in a painting by Piero di Cosimo, titled 'Perseo che libera Andromeda dal Monstro' [1510]. The painting depicts a myth recounted by Ovid in Book IV of the *Metamorphoses*. Perseus, arriving at Ethiopia after killing Medusa, sees Andromeda tied to a rock, as a sacrifice to a sea monster, to placate the sea-god her mother has offended. Perseus slays the sea monster and takes Andromeda as his bride. The painting depicts many scenes from this story. Daly writes: "[t]he terrible sea monster we recognize as the father in all his phallic magnificence" and proceeds to read the entire painting as a sexual landscape. He puts the monster in the place of Perseus's father, even though we know from Ovid that Perseus was the child of Zeus and Danaë. "Revolutionary Tendencies," 5. Having attributed the position of the father to the sea monster, Daly claims that sea monster's breath in the painting is directed toward's Andromeda's vagina, thus being symbolic of sexual intercourse. In Daly's account of the myth, Perseus, cuts off the monster's head, an act he interprets as the castration of the father. The painting does not depict this, and Ovid's description has Perseus repeatedly stabbing the monster all over his body instead of beheading it. It is interesting that Daly chose this representation by Piero di Cosimo, since di Cosimo was described by the painter and historian Giorgio Vasari as a 'savage' in his *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects.* See Sharon Fermor, *Piero di Cosimo: Fiction, Invention and Fantasìa* (London: Reaktion Books, 1993). According to the art historian Erwin Panofsky, di Cosimo painted with "the subconscious recollection of a primitive who happened to live in a period of sophisticated civilisation." The trouble in separating 'savage' from 'civilized' seems not just to trouble Daly's arguments but also his sources. Erwin Panofsky "The Early History of Man in a Cycle of Paintings by Piero di Cosimo," *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 1, no.1, (July 1937), 30.

British government is compared to a monster. By analogy, the Indian revolutionaries are Perseus. Even the ambivalence about authority that Daly seemed to forget when describing the colonial government as a kindly parent has returned to this account of politics. We find then that both Berkeley Hill and Claud Daly are led, in their writing, to images and analogies that unsettle the colonialist argument that they try to make.

This eruption of an unpleasant knowledge (about colonialism) often takes place when the psychoanalytic discussion is most in the service of a colonial position. Daly interprets Perseus' slaying of the monster in terms of castration: "the son, jealous of the father's relations with the females of the family, is about to cut of the father's head (=penis)".[249] While arguing that revolutionary tendencies arise from the son's jealousy of the father, he evades the possibility that the father may indeed be a tyrant. Yet it is in the course of this discussion, while writing about how a group needs to be based on libidinal ties in order to survive, that Daly writes: "[i]n India one serious trouble is that the personality of the ruler does not reach the greater number of the population, but only the disabilities emanating from the ruler in the form of a government which disturbs them by collecting taxes, etc.; even when these in themselves are justifiable they are often exploited by ruthless people".[250] Daly's words are telling, they suggest that the government has 'ruthless' people in its service, that taxes are a disturbance, and are in themselves not justified, only 'justifiable'—but Daly himself doesn't provide any arguments in favour of them.

Claud Daly argued that Indian revolutionaries were distinct in their deployment of masochism – exemplary amongst them Gandhi. Let us set aside, for the moment, this inclusion of Gandhi amongst revolutionary terrorists, and consider what Daly says: "[w]e can hardly pass by such an outstanding character as M. K. Gandhi, for his methods are a good example of one peculiar attribute of the Hindu character; we refer to the employment of suffering and renunciation as weapons."[251] This evaluation was influenced by Lord Ronaldshay's study of terrorism in *The Heart of Aryavarta*, which diagnosed the Indian nationalist movement as perverse: "in the sphere of politics the resurgent spirit of India has at times been perverted along channels which have led to rebellious movements against the existing

249. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 202.
250. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 207-208.
251. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 193.

order."[252] In my discussion of Freud's theories of sexuality in the previous Chapter, I suggest that psychoanalytic categories, especially 'perversion' do not lend themselves to use as terms of approbation. Though Berkeley Hill and Claud Daly explicitly position themselves in a psychoanalytic tradition, their discussions of 'anal tendencies' and 'masochism' is only tenuously in conversation with Freud's writing on these questions.

In fact, in this instance, the conversation with psychoanalysis can be said to be taking place elsewhere. The historian Faisal Devji has written that Gandhi's use of suffering as a political strategy was an attempt to reclaim sovereignty in a colonial situation: "if we define as sovereign any authority that can ask people to kill and die in its name, then we must recognize that what Gandhi did was to split the concept of sovereignty down the middle."[253] Though they were not in conversation with each other, the experience of WW1 for Freud, and the colonial situation for Gandhi, seems to have led them to a common interpretation of sovereign state authority as grounded in the exercise of violence—recall here our discussion of Freud's "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death", in Chapter One. "By separating dying from killing and prizing the former as a nobler deed," Devji writes that Gandhi was "doing nothing more than retrieving sovereignty from the state and generalizing it as a quality vested in individuals. For while such individuals may be unequal in their ability to kill they were all equally capable of dying, demonstrating therefore the universality of suffering and sacrifice over violence of all kinds."[254] This was political practice formulated around an interpretation of the psychic life of power—an interpretation independent of the vocabulary of psychoanalysis, yet not only conceptually and historically more powerful than those offered by Daly and Berkeley Hill, but closer in spirit to Freud's more radical moments. As we will find, at many points in the course of this thesis, the meetings between psychoanalysis and India can seem like missed encounters, opportunities for insight lost or jettisoned. Yet alongside these missed encounters, political and cultural production in colonial

252. Ronaldshay continues: "[t]here is no sadder chapter in the history of modern India than that which recounts the callous perversion of the emotional enthusiasm of a number of the young men of Bengal by the organisers of this criminal conspiracy. A study of it will be found illuminating." Lord Ronaldshay, *The Heart of Aryavarta,* 79.
253. Faisal Devji, *The Impossible Indian: Gandhi and the Temptation of Violence* (London: Hurst & Co., 2012), 6.
254. Devji, *Impossible Indian,* 6.

India provides a refreshing, challenging light in which to read Freud's work. It is this productive contradiction that sustains my account of psychoanalysis in India.

To return then to Berkeley Hill and Claud Daly, who, in their articles discussing Indian politics and native 'character', positioned themselves as observers taking an unbiased, fair and balanced view of events, unlike the natives who were too emotional and partisan. In their writing, both Berkeley Hill and Daly dissociate themselves from the 'Hindus' who are the subject of their research. Writing that "[i]n the Hindu, however, we have a psychology which differs considerably from the European, its equivalent with us being found only in pathological cases", Daly ascribes chronic derangement to an entire collectivity.[255] Berkeley Hill also dismissed *all* Hindus as having nothing worthwhile to recommend them, concluding his article with: "[w]hether the Hindu mind is capable of any further approximation to reality is a matter which the future alone can show."[256] This insistence is odd, given the many Indian employees whom Berkeley Hill praised warmly in his Asylum reports – in a manner which was not in keeping with contemporary Asylum reports from other provinces.[257] It is even more strange, given that Berkeley Hill dedicated his autobiography to his wife, a practicing Hindu.

The distant objects of critique in his psychoanalytical articles were actually the intimates of his life. When it was debated who exactly were the 'Europeans' who could have access to the Ranchi European Mental Asylum, then even Berkeley Hill's children get caught up in this contradictory theorising. The product of a mixed race marriage, their claim to the category of 'European' would not have been considered unambiguous. Indeed, writing about his children in his autobiography, Berkeley Hill says: "I have felt it essential to their peace of mind, as well as to their making a success of their lives, to warn them not against Indians but against Europeans, particularly Englishwomen, who are, in my opinion, a fecund source of several sorts of trouble in India."[258] This attempt, on the part of both Claud Daly and Berkeley Hill, to distance themselves from the subject populations is therefore worth

255. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 210.
256. Berkeley-Hill, "The Anal-Erotic Factor," 338.
257. For example, "Of all the visitors of both sexes the most loyal service to the hospital has been achieved by Mrs Hansdah, Lady Doctor, who has attended almost all the monthly meetings regularly since her appointment as a visitor of the hospital. In view of the fact the Mrs Hansdah is an Indian in the service of a hospital intended *only* for "Europeans and Americans", this is a particularly fine record." Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill *Report of the European Mental Hospital at Ranchi for the Triennium 1921-23*. Printed matter. File No. 11/II/25, Home Department, Jails 1925, NAI.
258. Berkeley Hill, *All Too Human,* 354.

interrogating, and their autobiographical writing helps us complicate the positions they take in their psychoanalytical articles. Accounts of their lives present a relationship to the colonies, the 'native' populations, and psychoanalysis itself, that is textured and complicated in a manner that these articles barely afford us a glimpse of.

'The awful shame of appearing to be thoroughly scared': Adventure and Psychoanalysis

In 1906, Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill's application to join the Indian Medical Service was accompanied by a letter of recommendation by Arnold Pelham, then President of Trinity College, Oxford. Pelham mentions Berkeley Hill's "great energy" and says that he is "keen about his work".[259] However what stands out is the following line: "[h]e has also I think, something of a spirit of adventure which would help him in work abroad and under new conditions."[260] Reading *All Too Human* suggests that Berkeley Hill tried to live his entire life under this sign of 'adventure,' or would at least have liked his readers to think that he did. He narrates in his autobiography incidents that are indicative of the authority and privileges that accrued to an upper class white man in the colony.

When he was in Calicut, Berkeley Hill found himself annoyed at night by Moplah Muslims conducting their prayers in the same building as him. He went and got into an altercation with them, and threatened to throw a slipper at the praying men. Realising that he hadn't acted very wisely: "it dawned on me that I was doing something very rash in threatening to throw a slipper at a Mohammedan engaged in religious exercises", he went to a police station to get them to stop the 'noise'.[261] Assuming an air of authority, he woke up the sleeping policemen, ordered them to arm themselves with lathis, marched them to his building and asked them to get the Moplah Muslims to be quiet. All this without being questioned, or having to explain who he was. One gathers that Berkeley Hill was quite amused that he could set a police force in action, while still in his pyjamas and with no legal or administrative authority over them. This one incident is typical of the many that Berkeley Hill narrates. He enjoyed his time in the colonies, which is presented to his readers as a

259. Arnold Pelham, *Letter of Recommendation 4 March 1906, Oxford*. L/MIL/9/423, IORPP.
260. Arnold Pelham, *Letter of Recommendation 4 March 1906, Oxford*. L/MIL/9/423, IORPP.
261. Berkeley Hill, *All Too Human*, 103.

series of escapades. He was proud of what he presents as his unorthodox style of living, and does not ask himself how much of this 'adventure' was based on his living in a social context where there were often no adverse consequences for a white man who broke social regulations, or even the law. Later, when he was posted in East Africa, Berkeley Hill wrote about the war in the same style of adventure and escapade. Accounts of losing men in the fighting are interspersed with accounts of hunting and exotic social gatherings. This is quite in keeping with Berkeley Hill's usual topics of description.

For Berkeley Hill, the colonies seem to have been a place different from 'civilisation'. We do not know where exactly this difference was located, but it may have been the people, the hunting, or the surfeit of authority allowed upper class white men. At the same time, Berkeley Hill's presence in India was justified through the colonial mission, i.e., through the idea that the native population could not govern itself and needed the presence of the colonial government and army. Given how much he valued the kind of 'adventure' the colonies had to offer, the pleasure that a man like Berkeley Hill derived from his time in the colony seemed to derive from a curious relationship to the colonial project: it relied, as indeed may have been true for many colonisers, on its *not* being successful, both so that the difference could continue on in its inferiority and exoticism, and so that the colonisers could prolong their presence.

In 1915, Berkeley Hill was sent to Quetta, where he was assigned to the Field Ambulance, and then onward to East Africa. War made intimacy with the various native populations quite unavoidable. The writing lets us know that this was the intimacy of crouching down together in the bushes and tending to each others' wounds. This is the difference between the writing on India before the war, and Africa during it. However, even here Berkeley Hill manages to maintain his paternalism, and presents himself as enthusing, cajoling or pacifying the men under his command. In reading Berkeley Hill, one finds that in order to maintain his command over the men he served with, he would often resort to an understanding of non-Europeans as 'types' rather than individuals. The non-Europeans we meet in his autobiography are usually illustrations, or examples of the larger, quite undifferentiated mass they are assigned to. And within these groups with their 'typical' traits, there were of course hierarchies. Berkeley Hill would use these in his interaction with the 'natives': "[f]or the first time since I had known Muhammad I

saw that he was thoroughly frightened. Pointing to the Basutos, who were standing around the boat with admirable composure, I said to him: 'Are you not ashamed of yourself? You, an Arab, behaving like a frightened child in front of these brave Negros!' This appeal had a very reassuring effect on him and he calmed down and took his place beside me."[262]

These instances are narrated by Berkeley Hill in his autobiography, published about two decades after the war. However, the letters he wrote at the time of the war tell a very different story, one in which the messiness and terror of war has not yet been excised from the narrating self, not yet turned into a joke at the expense at the labouring 'Arab' or 'Negro'. His letters to Ernest Jones during the war were composed in a state of delirium: "It strikes me that this letter is rather rot but really I have been devilish seedy for 3 days, so forgive me."[263] We find him bewildered, frightened, that is to say, he sounds like a man who is suffering through a war: "I am pretty bonny altogether except for the thunder and lightning phobia, which is worse than ever, I think. […] If I am called on to do anything or walk abroad I am *done*, so far I have been pretty lucky and managed to get through today and yesterday - both stormy without the awful shame of appearing to be thoroughly scared."[264]

This part of the story does not make it into the account of the war that he chose to preserve for future generations—the autobiography was intended for his children. Berkeley Hill thought of 'appearing to be thoroughly scared' as something that was an 'awful shame'. In the autobiography, fear is split off from him, accruing to a man of another race. Something shameful, embarrassing or otherwise inadmissible could only be acknowledged in the writing of the self in Berkeley Hill's autobiography when presented to the reader as an attribute of a socially disadvantaged other. Berkeley Hill's arrogantly expansive 'knowledge' about his companions—to know 'typical' Arab traits was to know all Arabs—was a way of not knowing something, it would seem from this moment, that somewhere he also knew about himself, his own fear and his own mortality.

His reports from the Ranchi European Mental Asylum suggest that Berkeley Hill's career after the war, and before he wrote his autobiography, was often a series

262. Berkeley Hill, *All Too Human*, 209-210.
263. Owen Berkeley Hill, *Owen Berkeley Hill to Ernest Jones, 5 November 1915*. Letter, CBA/F21/01, Ernest Jones Collection, BPS.
264. Owen Berkeley Hill, *Owen Berkeley Hill to Ernest Jones, 5 November 1915*. Letter, CBA/F21/01, Ernest Jones Collection, BPS.

of struggles against the colonial administration. Yet he held on to this conviction in the necessity of colonialism, trying to think of ways in which it could be made more efficient, comparing the French and British models.[265] Despite the catalogue of colonial horrors detailed in his autobiography—racism, administrative apathy, economic exploitation—he still wanted to sustain the colonial project. Berkeley Hill's writings present their reader with many instances in which the inefficiency of British imperial practices is obvious, and the British government frequently comes in for criticism during his account of the war. This makes it difficult to attribute his racism, and the way in which he seems to disown his war-time experiences in the writing of his autobiography, to some sort of blind allegiance to the British Empire. Rather, I suggest that it was linked to the difficulty of bearing and admitting emotional states and experiences that did not fit the construction of a masculine, white, colonial officer. In Berkeley Hill's case, it was the phobia that created, in his own body, a resistance to the opinions he held, the values he cherished and the self-image he wanted to hold on to. It is often these 'irrational' moments—dreams, this phobia—that undo this colonial narrative of 'a spirit of adventure' that Berkeley Hill and his compatriots subscribed to.[266] We also find this interplay, between the ideal of a colonial self and aspects of the psyche that resist it, in Claud Daly's diaries, to which his considerable investment in psychoanalysis adds a quite unusual twist.

In a long narrow room somewhere in the North Western Frontier, Daly was telling the two people with him, the Colonel and 'V', about a wonderful miniature pistol that he had. Then he was in a room upstairs, and 'V' came and said: "[t]he Colonel has asked you to assist in the defence with your small weapon." Daly continues: "I go down stairs and fire with deadly results at the Pathans who are attacking the four of us from without, sneaking up in large numbers, with deadly intent and long knifes."[267] He begins his interpretation of this dream by talking about his anxiety about the size of his penis: "yesterday I was thinking of the inferiority feeling I had always had, which I connected with what I conceived to be a smaller member than other boys had."[268] He thinks that his penis is symbolised by the small

265. "[t]he French insist, and I think with perfect right, that a French subject must become a Frenchman, and to become a Frenchman he must learn to speak French. As I have observed already, this should be our attitude towards our Indian and colonial coloured troops; but then an Englishman does not want an Indian or a Somali to become a Britisher." Berkeley Hill, *All Too Human,* 330 -331.
266. Cf David Marriott, *On Black Men* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000).
267. Diaries, 18 September 1921. P06/B/01.
268. Diaries, 18 September 1921. P06/B/01.

pistol in the dream. He then writes that the Colonel may stand for his father. At this point, however, there is a shift in the register of the interpretation, and Daly writes that he may be "overstepping" in thinking that the Colonel stands for his father. Instead he offers this remarkable interpretation, which I shall quote at length:

> when the house is attacked by Pathans V says that the Colonel has agreed that I shall assist them in fighting the Pathans but have I not overshot the mark in calling the Colonel and V my Father and Uncle B - do they not rather represent Professor F and Dr. J. who after examining my psychological knowledge and inclination, have agreed to allow me to assist them in fighting the enemy, Ignorance, which is symbolised by the attacking Pathans - the resistance of the masses when faced by the Truth as symbolised in the small party of psycho-Analysts bravely facing the world confident that they have the foundation of truth behind them, and so F sends Dr. J to tell me that my little gun is a good enough weapon and he will accept it to be used in the defence of the garrison.[269]

Daly wrote down this dream in 1921, after his war service in France and the North West Frontier of India. The Pathans were one of the tribal groups who were the inhabitants of the region, and were classified by the British as a 'martial race' – i.e., a 'race' whose men were suitable for recruitment into the imperial army. Increased interest and presence in this region created a strong ethnographical imperative for the British. As the historian Gajendra Singh points out, these ethnographies often "attempted to close the gap between flights of imagination and reality. Officers sought to prove the veracity of colonial fantasies by officially recording the 'characteristics, customs, prejudices, history and religion' of martial classes."[270]

The British perception of the Pathans varied considerably and changed as their military and bureaucratic interests in the region changed.[271] Indeed it is not

---

269. Diaries, 18 September 1921. P06/B/01.
270. Gajendra Singh, *The Testimonies of Indian Soldiers and the Two World Wars: Between the Self and Sepoy*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 17.
271. See RTI Ridgway, "Pathans" in *Handbooks for the Indian Army*. (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1910); Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans: 550 BC – AD 1957* (London: Kegan Paul, 2000); *Ethnographic Survey of Baluchistan* ed. Denys Bray (Bombay: Times Press, 1913). For critical commentaries see Singh, *Testimonies*; Warren, *Waziristan, the Fakir of Ipi*.

uncommon to find entirely contradictory descriptions of 'Pathan character' on the same page in books by British officials. The volume on 'Pathans' in the *Handbooks for the Indian Army* offers a telling example of the extent to which perceptions of Pathans were shaped by the situation in which they were encountered, and more importantly, the military and political interests that shaped the encounter: "tyranny, revenge, blood thirstiness" are amongst the long list of traits by which the author says the Pathans have been "stigmatized" by those who encountered them while "engaged in expeditions against them", however, when the same Pathans are encountered as recruits in the imperial army they are praised for their "courtesy, courage, cheerfulness" making them "excellent companion[s]" and "valuable soldier[s]".[272] Given that the political conditions changed quite rapidly, "Pathans' frontier nobility was replaced by frontier degeneracy within a matter of years from 1910."[273]

The authors of these *Handbooks* and ethnographies saw themselves as offering useful information and advice to other British people who had to serve in the region. They present their texts as records of objective and informed observation, a claim that, in hindsight, is undercut by the contradictory claims that pile up in volumes produced within a few decades of each other. Colonial ethnography created a collective fantasy of the Pathans, which while it may have been contradictory and divergent on the characteristics it attributed to them, was united in thinking that a colonising military and bureaucratic presence could produce some sort of unambiguous knowledge about the people who lived in the territories that it tried to administer. Colonial ethnographies on the Pathans, like Berkeley Hill in his autobiography, emphasize supposedly racial or tribal characteristics, pushing them into a collective identity.

The desire for 'manliness' was a key strand in the description of martial races, one that had added meaning in relation to the Pathans. The ethnographies describe sexual interactions amongst men in Pathan society, because of the socially accepted practice of man-boy love. [274] In one of Daly's dreams, his fellow officers and he are offered young 'native' boys to take to bed. Daly describes himself in bed with the boy, wanting to penetrate him but simultaneously feeling afraid of being

272. RTI Ridgway,"Pathans", 15.
273. Singh, *Testimonies,* 33.
274. See Singh, *Testimonies,* for a discussion of how 'manliness' was constructed in the *Military Handbooks.*

found out and fearing contact with the boy's anus. Here, the sexual and social anxiety were welded together. Daly's records of his dreams offer many instances of such merging together of the socio-political and psycho-sexual. In this dream, the fear of social disapproval attaches itself to sexual anxiety and manifests itself in the dream. In other dreams, there seems to be a transgression of the lines that would have been drawn in waking life. Thus Daly records another dream in which he receives and performs fellatio on 'an Indian'. The description of the dream is followed by a memory of an incident: "there was the episode with the Indian at ----- when I let him suck my penis, but did not suck his I thought it dirty, and really would not have liked to because he was a native, but I am sure that I would have liked to have done so had he been my father or brother, it is evident from the erection that I am getting now that this phase of me is near the surface".[275]

Race was lodged into these distinctions between who could do what in a sexual encounter. 'Native' and 'dirty' go together, and here the distinctions of race and status carry more weight than the incest taboo—Daly cannot admit to wanting to suck a native's penis, but he can write about wanting to perform the same act with his father or brother. The dream, however, did not maintain these distinctions and there the exchange with the Indian was reciprocal. In 1860, the colonial government had introduced a penal code that did not name homosexuality, but criminalised sexual acts 'against the order of nature'.[276] There was continued commentary on homosexuality though, usually in the guise of describing the practices of primitive tribes—indicative of what Neville Hoad calls the "endlessly displaceable national and racial origins of homosexuality".[277] In the ethnographies such desires on the part of British officers were never acknowledged, with the result that the Pathan, or other native populations being discussed, were the ones onto whom fantasies were projected, along with the condemnation that these practices would have attracted in the mainstream of British social life.

Even though the Pathans participated in the same war as Daly, they only figure as representatives of a mysterious and dangerous primitivity for him. While psychoanalysis allowed Daly to avoid moral condemnation of homosexuality, it was

275. Diaries, September and December 1930 n.d., P06/B/07. the ----- indicates a space left blank in the diary entry.
276. The Indian Penal Code 1860 s 377.
277. Neville Hoad, "Arrested Development or the Queerness of Savages: Resisting Evolutionary Narratives of Difference," *Postcolonial Studies* 3, no. 2 (2000), 139.

not sufficient to address the various kinds of anxieties released in the text by discussions of homosexual encounters. Given the lower rungs occupied by both the homosexual and primitive on the evolutionary ladder, an admission of homosexuality was threatening for someone who identified himself with civilisation. In Daly's writing, the Pathans barely exist outside of the place they occupy in his dream landscapes. This relationship was intimate enough, because it was where Daly's fears and fantasies lay, but it was also a relationship that could not accept or incorporate the much more banal and commonplace shared histories and interactions with the Pathans. One finds that it is despite, and against the backdrop of his shared history with the Pathans that they come to figure as representatives of ignorance, rather than everyday neighbours, in Daly's dreams. Though the unconscious pulled against such a settlement, psychoanalysis was being pressed into the service of 'civilisation'.

It is worth bearing in mind that British ethnography on the frontier tribes, and manuals and advice about appropriate behaviour with the tribal representatives, were based on a solid foundation of armed force—regular military expeditions were sent out to 'discipline' and 'punish' recalcitrant populations. In the previous chapter, we discussed how Freud describes the superego as an internal garrison. A cruel master, it has an insatiable appetite for renunciation and punishment. This violent and perverse internal theatre sounds remarkably like accounts of life on the Frontier. The supposedly primitive tribes were seen as belonging to an ahistorical time of primitivity and ignorance, and the colonial authorities related to them in the manner in which Freud describes the superego's relationship to the rest of the psyche. Jacqueline Rose, in her book *States of Fantasy* alerts us to the proximity in form of the superego and the modern state.[278] I would like to suggest that the superego's place in the psyche evokes the colonial state, or the colonial aspect of modern states. Like the superego, colonial authorities tried to tame and punish the recalcitrant inhabitants of the landscape.

What Freud's discussion of the superego also alerts us to is the aggressive component of any moral injunction. It is this aspect that is magnified in the frontier

278. "For Freud, the superego exerts an authority beyond all reason, implacable to the precise extent that it draws on all the unconscious energies it is meant to tame (it therefore endlessly punishes *and* recycles the crime). Which is why inside the head, the law always feels a bit crazy and why, although it never stops trying, it can never quite fully justify itself. Like the state, the superego is both ferocious and a bit of a fraud." Jacqueline Rose, *States of Fantasy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 9.

practices of the colonial army. Daly's dream shows the sheer military force that is required to sustain a supposedly 'moral' mission. After all, the justifications for colonisation tended to be moral, as much economic or militaristic. In fact the 1858 *Proclamation by the Queen in Council to the Princes, Chiefs and People of India*, after the transfer of power from the East India Company to the British Crown, frames colonisation as an entirely benevolent act: "We hold ourselves bound to the Natives of Our Indian Territories by the same Obligations of Duty which bind Us to all Our other Subjects; and those Obligations, by the Blessing of ALMIGHTY GOD, We shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil" all the while relying on the "truth of Christianity".[279]

So what is it that must be protected in Daly's 'defence of the garrison'? Daly, who could not question the basis of existence of his society—colonialism and its moral justification as the civilising mission—also tried to replicate this unquestioning attitude in psychoanalysis, wanting to be led by Colonel Freud and Ernest Jones. Daly's wish was for a psychoanalysis that could be aligned to an idea of confident certain knowledge, itself seen as an attribute or virtue of the colonisers in the imperial context. This was psychoanalysis roped into an imperial understanding of frontier expeditions. Daly's interpretation sounds strikingly similar to the words of Lord Salisbury, Secretary of State for India 1874-1878, who said that Frontier wars "are but the surf that marks the edge and advance of the wave of civilization".[280] In the dream discussed above, a part of the native population of Balochistan stands for ignorance, and the colonising British army stands for psychoanalysis, and this is psychoanalysis understood as truth, as certainty and as certain access to truth.[281]

'Curious Beasts': Shikar, Masculinity, and Sexual Anxiety

An ideal of masculinity was central to the imperial self that Claud Daly and Berkeley Hill attempted to portray in their writing. Fantasies of sexual mastery were

279. "Proclamation by the Queen in Council to the Princes, Chiefs and People of India Allahabad, India, 1858" in *East India Proclamations* (London: House of Commons, 1908), 2-3.
280. Lord Salisbury quoted in Warren, *Waziristan, The Faqir of Ipi,* xxiv.
281. When Freud died, Daly would end his letter of condolence to Anna Freud with the following sentence: "[y]our father himself is immortal, his name will be remembered by men so long as traces of our civilisation persist." It was as though Freud's writing on mourning, as well as civilisation, had entirely passed Daly by. Claud Daly, *C.D. Daly to Anna Freud*. Letter, n.d. (September 1939?) AF/03/06/033, Anna Freud Papers, Anna Freud Archive, Freud Museum London.

involved in the desire to fashion this colonial masculinity, yet in Berkley Hill and Claud Daly's writing we find that the vicissitudes of sexuality were in fact the greatest threat to such a self-image. In the last chapter of his autobiography, which Berkeley Hill titled "My Horses", the reader is presented with an account of a boar hunt. Berkeley Hill had gone hunting with one of the "fine officers" of 2nd Lancers, Gardiner's Horse, Major Frank Maxwell. During the course of the hunt, Major Maxwell's horse fell because the boar ran under it. The fall broke Major Maxwell's right wrist. He refused medical attention, shouting to Berkeley Hill: "'Go on, you bloody little fool'".[282] The encounter with the boar also frightened Berkeley Hill's horse Bucephalus, who refused to charge at it. Major Maxwell then suggested that the boar be attacked on foot, and approached the animal with his spear tucked under his left shoulder. The boar was speared, and then Berkeley Hill went up to the Major and tried to remonstrate with him. The injury should have been tended to, he said, but the Major responded: "'[y]ou are here to learn pig sticking, not doctoring.'"[283]

The hunt was an important site where ideals of colonial masculinity were staged. The ritual of the hunt allowed the participants to perform "the peculiar notions of sportsmanship, masculinity and gentlemanliness important to Victorian England."[284] In this incident, we are presented with a sketch of a "fine officer", who in the pursuit of his goal, is both impervious to his own pain and fearless in the face of real danger to his person. Of course the fact that it was a mere boar that called forth this extravagant performance and narrative of bravado could be seen as somewhat pathetic—but Berkeley Hill was drawing upon a whole tradition of representing 'shikar'.[285] The colonialist as shikari was a gentleman, but also a protector, especially when the animal being hunted was 'dangerous'. In both Berkeley Hill and Claud Daly's writing, shikar is tied to questions of sexuality. To explore this entanglement of the pursuit of sex and the tracking of game and the questions it raises about sexual exchanges in a colonial context, I will turn to the writing of feminist and psychoanalyst Jessica Benjamin. Her work, I suggest, casts light on some of the structures that seem to be legible in the manner in which Berkeley Hill and Claud Daly portray their sexual experiences.

---

282. Berkeley Hill, *All Too Human,* 360.
283. Berkeley Hill, *All Too Human,* 360.
284. Swati Shresth "*Sahibs* and *Shikar*: Colonial Hunting and Wildlife in British India 1800- 1935" (PhD Dissertation, Durham: Duke University), 370.
285. The *Hobson Jobson* defines 'Shikar' as "sport (in the sense of shooting and hunting); game". Yule and Burnell, 468.

In her influential psychoanalytic study of the problem of domination, *The Bonds of Love*, Benjamin turns her attention to the question of recognition. Drawing from Hegel, she writes that the "condition of our own independent existence is recognizing the other."[286] Recognition is a process in which both parties move between moments of recognition and negation. Offering an account of relationships of submission and domination, Benjamin argues that in such arrangements, the two elements of the process of recognition are split, with one subject embodying only one of the two moments. While it seems that the subject to whom domination accrues has all the power and agency, the failure of recognition is mutual. When the subjectivity of the submissive subject, the 'slave', is erased, there is no one left to recognize the dominating subject, or, as Benjamin puts it: "the master's denial of the other's subjectivity leaves him faced with isolation as the only alternative to being engulfed by the dehumanized other."[287]

In addition to her reflections on the problem of recognition, Benjamin's thinking about sexual difference and parental authority is also pertinent to this discussion. Commenting on how the mother and father's roles are imagined in psychoanalytic theorising and wider social attitudes, Jessica Benjamin writes that "every idealization defends against something: the idealization of the father masks the child's fear of his power."[288] She argues that "the myth of good paternal authority that is rational and prevents regression purges the father of all terror and, […] displaces it on to the mother, so that she bears the badness for both of them."[289] As we shall see, in the colonial context such a splitting had implications not only for gender relations but also the equation between coloniser and colonised. Jessica Benjamin has pointed out that feminists have interrogated and complicated Freud's account of 'penis envy' as central to femininity, but the boy's "disidentification with his mother is still considered a necessary step in the formation of masculine identity" and remains widely uninterrogated.[290] Benjamin argues that the repudiation of femininity creates a stance towards women that is constituted "of fear, of mastery, of

286. Jessica Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love* (New York: Pantheon, 1988), 52.
287. Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love*, 65.
288. Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love*, 136
289. Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love*, 136
290. Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love*, 160.

distance" and that such a position "by no means recognizes her as a different but like subject."[291]

As a colonial officer in India and East Africa, Berkeley Hill did not confine his exploits to hunting. His autobiographies also present women as trophies, collected across continents. Berkeley Hill styled himself as a sexual libertarian, and this combined with his affinity for identifying 'tribal' characteristics, led to descriptions like the following: "I knew enough of East Africa to know that Lamu was famous for the beauty of its women as well as for their want of virtue".[292] Another incident from India details how during a hot summer night Berkeley Hill propositioned the woman pulling his punkah: "[w]ith a display of the obscene bashfulness that characterises Indian women of this type, she accompanied me to my bedroom".[293] The conquest of women, like the hunting of animals, were crucial sites for establishing the potency of the colonial officer. Berkeley Hill's writing on shikar shows how fantasies of masculinity and memories of shikar accompanied each other.

Throughout his autobiography, women across three continents implore Berkeley Hill to have sex with them, or confer their immediate consent to propositions by him. Berkeley Hill's sexual libertarianism was based on a narrow understanding of sex as sexual intercourse, with no attention to the conditions in which such encounters took place, and the particular circumstances in which consent is given or withheld. In the two examples cited above, the women's participation was seen as deriving from their group characteristics – Lamu 'want of virtue' and Indian 'obscene bashfulness'. This interpretation of sex is quite different from the psychoanalytical understanding. As we had the opportunity to note in Chapter 1, Freud's writing stresses that not all that is sexual can be expressed through sexual intercourse, in fact what matters is the psychic experience of human sexuality. Moreover, Berkeley Hill bypasses questions of the material conditions in which sexual transactions take place, especially in times of war, and between servants and masters. In Berkeley Hill's descriptions of his sexual conquests, the women disappear into an undifferentiated collective, they are barely subjects.

One might therefore suggest, at risk of wild analysis, that the repetitiveness with which Berkeley Hill writes of his sexual conquests in his autobiography,

---

291. Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love*, 164. See also Jessica Benjamin, *Like Subjects, Love Objects: Essays on Recognition and Sexual Difference* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995)
292. Berkeley Hill, *All Too Human,*179.
293. Berkeley Hill, *All Too Human,* 106.

indicates that such a position of potency could never successfully be established, rather that it was something that had to be rehearsed repeatedly to sustain a sense of mastery. The injustice and brutality of the colonial situation also lay in the fact that it buttressed such an attempt at, amongst other things, erotic mastery. The failure of recognition—the 'isolation', 'being engulfed by the dehumanized other'—that such an attempt may have met with in another situation could be avoided, because the drama itself could be restaged, with another partner who had to submit. The autobiography that he wrote implies that Berkeley Hill's colonial authority provided the conditions for the repeated restaging, across continents, of this drama of domination and submission, by providing women who, through war or poverty, had to render themselves available and willing.

Yet even under these colonial conditions, and in their service, there was something about the sexual that still resisted mastery. Once again, Claud Daly's diaries take us under the surface of the life of a colonial officer, to the realms of desire and fantasy. In 1910 Claud Daly's Commanding Officer wrote that he was "very keen on shikar" and a "good rider", and in the decade that his diaries span, Claud Daly dreamt of hunting grouse, sparrows, tigers, boar and bears.[294] At about the time when he'd put in an application for privilege leave in 1921, and was awaiting its approval, Claud Daly dreamt of a holiday—and woke up with a headache. He dreamt that he had been granted four months' leave, and someone had suggested that he go shooting in the mountains, to shoot a creature that he couldn't identify. These strange creatures had "fine large horns but practically no head, just the horns at the end of the neck".[295] There was a sort of face at the junction of these horns. In his dream, Daly looks at them as though from below, these forms "sort of sticking out of the side of the mountain".

When he writes the associations to his dream, Daly thinks immediately of a "black vagina", or rather the childhood experience or memory of having seen one: "the black vagina of my childhood." He attributed his headache to this part of the dream. His associations flow on and he says "the long horns are the legs and the black sort of face the vagina at first they appeared to have no head but when I looked again I saw there was a sort of face–eyes and a mouth, also made of black horn." He

294. *Annual Confidential Report*, L/Mil/14/61304, 1910, IORPP.
295. Diaries, September 1921, n.d., P06/B/01. All subsequent extracts from this diary entry are taken from the same source.

interpreted the angle from which he saw the horns sticking out of the mountains as him looking up between a pair of thighs. Writing and interpreting his dream made him remember more of it, and he recalled how his friend R had told him about a place where there were some duck in a pond—easy to shoot, but "private", which made it inappropriate to shoot them: "[w]hen I got there, there were several black ponds I seem to think five of them, some black duck seemed to fly away – then I saw that they were all fat tame duck, and a lot of white ones and although they would be very good to eat, it would be unsporting to shoot them". Daly interpreted the ponds as signifying black vaginas, and the ducks as women. He thought that black ducks that flew away, which he felt inclined to shoot, represented female children, and that they then turned into "fat old English, tame ducks – ie my grandmother. No doubt R is myself and at first I would like to shoot them, practice incest with them, but then I learn that one cannot do so with one's own women folk, so they become tame duck that one must not touch".

Further associations to Daly's childhood and family come up. He wonders whether looking up into the cleft in the mountain may have meant looking up at either sex, his father or his grandmother. Daly writes: "[i]n the dream I felt that I knew the animal that I had seen the curious beasts but that I had never possessed one". Something seemed very strange about them, as though their heads had been cut off: "[i]t was as though their penis had been cut off and left them only with the rough scar between their legs". Relating to the number five that appeared in the dream, Daly thought that it signified the five vaccination spots he had on his arm. He then reconstructed from that: "it was about the same time that I had both experiences, the seeing the vagina and being vaccinated, and my fainting fits started about then – perhaps I feared that the man who vaccinated me would also castrate me, like the women had been castrated". The fear of being castrated became attached to another terrifying image—that of the stumps of amputated legs being stuck in boiling pitch. Daly writes that he was afraid that the same would be done to the wound of castration: "which was why women were black between the legs".

In the chiaroscuro of Daly's dream, black accrues to the strange horned creatures, to liquids—ponds and boiling pitch, and to the wound between women's legs. The image of a "black vagina" is also a recurring one. Daly's anxiety around castration condenses into this image, leading him to associate vaginas with death: "how often in dreams is the vagina now symbolised by a 'black' hole, and it is not

sufficient to suppose that this is just because the mons veneris is often covered in dark hair – black is universally a symbol of death, and we cannot take it as mean [sic] anything else but that the vagina once the symbol of life the urge to impregnate came to have the signification of death for man". These operations of fantasy in Daly's writing could be said to highlight, albeit unintendedly, the non-essential nature of race—amongst other things, a racialised other was constructed out of anxiety. Black, while representing something anxious in the dream, cannot be understood simply as race. The record of the dream shows that the way in which meaning is commonly ordered breaks down in the unconscious.[296] The manner in which different elements of the dream meld into each other is in contrast to the stricter separations that were imposed in the waking and watchful day. This breakdown of cherished distinctions created an anxiety that relentlessly sought forms in which to manifest itself. It imbued both the feminine and the racialized body, as well as sticking to an entire landscape.

In many of Daly's dream interpretations, it is the sight of the female genitals that brings about the knowledge of the possibility of castration for the boy. The fact that the vagina bleeds reinforces this gruesome threat of castration, and, according to Daly, establishes the awful authority of the father. Castration was the rubric through which Daly interpreted most of his dreams. Let us recall Daly's article on the psychology of revolutionary tendencies. There, while arguing for the necessity of parental authority in the colonies—a role to be performed by the colonial government—Daly did not conceive of the father as a terrifying figure. Yet we find that Daly's writing, in his diaries, pulls against that construction of benevolent colonial paternal authority. The attitudes towards the father were split: terror and anxiety in the private writing, idealization and allegiance in public positions. Despite this split, the psychical motivations which Daly attributes to the revolutionary in his article, such the desire to castrate the father, is remarkably like what he identifies in

296. For an account of overdetermination and condensation in dreams, see Freud, "The Method of Interpreting Dreams: An Analysis of a Specimen dream" in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *SE* 4. Here Freud writes about what is widely referred to as the dream of 'Irma's Injection'. Even when Freud is concerned with establishing that dreams have a meaning, he indicates that which is 'unplumable' about a dream, what he calls the navel of the dream. Shoshana Felman has pointed out that "Irma is in fact the condensation of three different women, representing, with respect to Freud, three different sorts of feminine relations" who are then submitted to "an exclusively male examination". Shoshana Felman, *What Does a Woman Want: Reading and Sexual Difference* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 77; 82. See also Samuel Weber, *The Legend of Freud* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

himself and describes at length in his diaries. At times, when he is writing about castration in the article, even his phrasing is akin to his style in his diaries, especially the use of equal '=' signs : "slays (=castrates)"; "daughter (= sister)"; "*his hated rival* (=brother in the normal family); "Gorgon's head (=bloody vagina = menstruating woman)."[297] The equations are hardly self-explanatory and don't always make sense but they are close to Daly's interpretations of his dream symbols.

These imaginings of primal scenes were not limited to Daly's individual history, he also tried to develop phylogenetic theories around the idea of a menstrual trauma. By reconstructing primal scenes, Daly attempted to theorise castration, combining questions about evolution with accounts of castration. In his diaries, a discussion of castration anxiety is typically followed by an attempt to construct a primal evolutionary narrative. Daly's article, "The Role of Menstruation in Human Phylogenesis and Ontogenesis" brings together these concerns with castration and evolution.[298] Daly's attempt is to find an explanation of the transition to civilisation by studying the "influence which man's reactions to female sexuality have had upon human psychic evolution".[299] Daly traces the transition that takes place in men's response to women's menstrual blood, from attraction to repulsion, with repulsion indicating that a more advanced civilisational state has been reached. He speculates about the human animal distinction, and psychic evolution to construct a labyrinthine theory of men's response to women's menstrual blood which, he argues, is characterised by a profound ambivalence. His article is often disjointed, much like his diary entries, and many of the concerns are similar. Daly himself acknowledges the article's proximity to his psyche by writing that he began his research "under the influence of deep material which had erupted from my unconscious after prolonged self analysis".[300] Yet in the article, by contrast, Daly's concerns from the past

297. Daly, "Revolutionary Tendencies," 203. Freud was not in favour of interpretation of dreams through the use of fixed symbols: "my procedure is not so convenient as the popular decoding method which translates any given piece of a dream's content by a fixed key. I, on the contrary, am prepared to find that the same piece of content may conceal a different meaning when it occurs in various people or in various contexts.". *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE* 4:105.
298. The article is, in part, a response to Freud's "Civilization and its Discontents" where he says his views are misrepresented by Freud in the footnote at the beginning of section IV. See footnote no. 1, "Civilization and its Discontents" *SE* 21:99. The article was not discussed much, and has a much more limited scope than 'Civilization and its Discontents'. Daly is not interested in questions of ethics, and is quite comfortable with the evolutionary paradigm.
299. Claud Daly, "The Role of Menstruation in Human Phlyogenesis and Ontogenesis" *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 24, (1943), 167.
300. Daly, "The Role of Menstruation," 152.

decades, his personal ambivalence, have been distanced from himself and presented as theory.[301]

Daly's article links the repudiation of femininity to a civilisational teleology. Greater 'repulsion' towards women's menstrual blood indicates a higher civilised state. Even though in the article on menstruation Claud Daly is not particularly concerned with India, he discusses a novel set there. It is a story of a missionary seduced by a forest dwelling female spirit to whom goats are sacrificed, and whose dwelling smells of blood and flowers. Both the author of the novel, and Daly, highlight the simultaneous attraction and repulsion that runs through the story. Once again, like in his shikar dream, ambivalence about femininity and images of a foreign landscape accompany each other. Let us recall the geography of Balochistan—it was the mountains and ravines of the region that made it so difficult to conquer, as well economically unrewarding for the British administration. The Pathans were also renowned (or notorious, depending on the commentator) for their guerrilla warfare tactics, and their ability to use this landscape to their best advantage. In the dream, this landscape is inhabited by strange and threatening animals, born out of Daly's most deeply entrenched anxieties. What was strange and threatening about a foreign land, the mountains and ravines, as well as the encounter with racial difference became glued, in Daly's imagination, to something frightening about sexual difference. I suggest that Claud Daly and Berkeley Hill were unable to acknowledge either women or 'native' populations as 'different but like subjects'.[302] Instead, they created fantastic, fear imbued geographies and constructed narratives of conquest.

A 'black sort of face' of the Other: Ethics and the Problem of Disavowal

Octave Mannoni's book, *Prospero and Caliban* offers brilliant insights into the damage wreaked by the colonial relationship on the psyches of both coloniser and colonised. A colonial administrator posted in the French colony of Madagascar,

301. The article was published in 1943, after Daly had left the Army and begun to practice as an analyst in London. As many of Daly's diaries from this later period were destroyed in a fire, and there are no other biographical sources available, it is not possible to situate this article amidst other contemporary writing by him.

302. Jessica Benjamin writes: "the difficulty lies in assimilating difference without repudiating likeness—that is, in straddling the space between the opposites. It is easy enough to give up one side of a polarity in order to oscillate toward the other side. What is difficult is to attain a notion of difference, being unlike, without giving up a sense of commonality, of being a 'like' human being." *Like Subjects, Love Objects*, 50.

Mannoni later trained to be an analyst and was part of the École Freudienne de Paris. This first book by Mannoni acknowledges the economic and psychic destruction caused by colonisation, yet also frequently justifies the colonial presence. Certain aspects of his thinking on colonisation echo positions Claud Daly and Berkeley Hill took. In a manner reminiscent of Daly's argument about why Indians/Hindus had been colonised, Mannoni wrote: "to my mind there is no doubting the fact that colonization has always required the existence of the need for dependence. Not all peoples can be colonised: only those who experience this need."[303] In his response to Mannoni, Frantz Fanon wrote: "The arrival of the white man in Madagascar inflicted an unmistakeable wound. The consequences of this European irruption in Madagascar are not only psychological, since, as everyone has said, there are inner relationships between consciousness and social context.What about the economic consequences? It's colonization that needs to be put on trial!"[304]

Mannoni, like Daly and Berkeley Hill, sometimes resolves his ambivalence about the colonial project into a romantic ideal of what such an enterprise involved: "European colonizers have battled successfully against hunger, sickness, slavery, ignorance—for all these evils have recoiled somewhat before their attack—but in spite of their good work have failed to achieve friendly relations with the 'colonized' and we are now inclined to think that theirs was the wrong way to go about it."[305] Yet unlike Daly and Berkeley Hill, Mannoni expressly engaged with his own ambivalence about the colonial situation. His time in the colonies led him to recognize that he was in need of greater self-understanding: "it is as difficult to see something of one's self in all men as it is to accept oneself completely as one is. For this reason I became preoccupied with my search for an understanding of my own self, as being an essential preliminary for all research in the sphere of colonial affairs."[306] While Mannoni did not himself eschew a diagnostic analysis of Malagasy psychology (one of the most controversial aspects of his book is his thesis about the 'dependency complex' of the natives of Madagascar), he also recognized that in discussions of the colonised by the coloniser, the fantasies and fears of the latter

303. Octave Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* trans. Pamela Powesland (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 85.
304. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 77.
305. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban,* 32.
306. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban,* 34.

were prominent: "the presence of a man whom our unconscious takes to be a 'savage' can cause confused and disquieting feelings to be roused in us."[307]

It is this ability to contemplate the involvement of fantasy in the kind of knowledge that is produced about the colonised, that makes Mannoni an original and incisive thinker about the question of the other in a colonial situation. In fact he offers an account of the relationship between self and other in which neither has a proper place, neither is the property of itself. He writes that "every human face appears enigmatic to us at first" and that when an infant looks at a face "it seems probably that the face becomes meaningful to *him* just then and that he *makes* it either friendly or unfriendly, so to speak, from inside himself."[308] Where is the infant located in this exchange? It would seem that it is there both in its own body, and in the enigmatic face it contemplates. When Mannoni describes the reactions of colonisers to the unrest amongst the Malagasies, he says that they see them as "the stirrings of a half-tamed barbarism of the instincts, while at the same time, the contradiction notwithstanding, they like to consider them the product of some deliberate and evil plan, hypocritically worked out behind the screen of an inscrutable 'face'."[309] While the fantasies and internal psychic life are involved in both accounts of an encounter with another 'face', for the colonial observer the face has turned into a 'screen'—or if we borrow Daly's expression, 'a sort of face'.

Much of recent thinking on ethics has drawn upon Emmanuel Levinas' account of an ethical encounter with the face of the other. A "destitution without any cultural ornament", the naked face, according to Levinas, is a "visitation" and "supplication" that makes an ethical demand on the subject: "a face is imposed on me without my being able to be deaf to its call or to forget it, that is, without my being able to cease to be held responsible for its distress." [310]In her book *Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism*, Judith Butler discusses how, for Levinas, the commandment not to kill came from a face, which didn't have to be a face as such—"any sign of injurability counts as the face."[311] Christopher Lane, in his important revaluation of Mannoni's contribution to the analysis of racism, argues

307. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban,* 18.
308. Mannoni *Prospero and Caliban,* 199.
309. Mannoni *Prospero and Caliban,* 199.
310. Emmanuel Levinas, "The Trace of the Other" in *In Deconstruction in Context,* trans. Alphonso Lingis ed. Marc C. Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 352.
311. Judith Butler, *Parting Ways:Jewishness and the Critique of Zion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014)

that Mannoni's work develops "an understanding of racial conflict that is free of essentialism".[312] And indeed, like the abstract quality of 'injurability' that Butler draws attention to, for Mannoni too, the effect of an encounter with the other did not require this other to be corporeally present. In an article published a decade after *Prospero and Caliban*, titled "The Decolonisation of Myself", Mannoni considers the effects of an impersonal, yet vital other: "the ghost of the former colonial subject haunts (without their being aware of it) relationships amongst whites who have never left Europe".[313]

But even for Levinas, Butler points out, there were some faces that did not count as faces, significant amongst these, the Palestinians. This prompts us to ask: what are the conditions in which the face of the other turns into nothing but 'a sort of face'? Mannoni's essay titled "I Know Well, But All the Same…" discusses how it is quite possible to go on believing in something while very well knowing it to be false.[314] Disavowal, the idea that Mannoni explores in this essay, is a state in which the mind is capable of believing two contradictory things simultaneously. The contradiction is not one between conscious and unconscious knowledge here, rather, it is a contradiction within consciousness itself. This suggests that belief may not find its mooring in fact, but in something else. The very concept of disavowal is a challenge to the idea of the consistent, self-knowing subject. In this chapter, I've argued that in a colonial context, sexuality and knowledge were two crucial sites for the navigation of a relation to an other. The idea of disavowal brings these concerns together.

Disavowal was discussed by Freud in relation to fetishism. He writes that the boy disavows the knowledge that women are castrated "for if a woman had been castrated, then his own possession of a penis was in danger".[315] Fetishism is a means of both hiding the knowledge of this lack, while at the same time compensating for it, as a response to the panic that arises when the subject must take on the knowledge of his lack, come to terms with difference. Previously we discussed Jessica Benjamin's argument that the repudiation of femininity, of dependence, seems to be

312. Christopher Lane, "Psychoanalysis and Colonialism Redux: Why Mannoni's 'Prospero Complex' Still Haunts Us," *Journal of Modern Literature* 25, no. 3/4 (2002), 129.
313. Octave Mannoni, "The Decolonisation of Myself," *Race and Class* 7, Issue 4 (1966): 330. The 'colonial subject' here could refer to either the coloniser or colonised.
314. Octave Mannoni, "I Know Well, But All the Same" trans G.M. Goshgarian, in *Perversion and the Social Relation* ed. Rothenberg, Foster, Žižek (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).
315. Freud, "Fetishism," *SE* 21:153.

the route to a masculine position, rather than an acceptance of difference, and noted how 'dependence' and 'femininity' were associated with colonised populations. Particularly interesting in Freud's essay is the link he draws between the panic that first arises in this childhood encounter with lack, and "a similar panic when the cry goes up that Throne and Altar are in danger" which the adult man may experience, and from which "similar illogical consequences will ensue".[316] I read this as a warning, by Freud, of the kinds of identifications with authority ('Throne and Altar') that may accompany the inability to cope with difference, and, by extension, the denial of dependence. Mannoni wrote his essay on disavowal many years after publishing *Prospero and Caliban*. It is fitting that this study of disavowal came from a former colonial administrator interested in psychoanalysis, because our discussion of the autobiographical writings of colonial officers in India repeatedly confronts us with the intertwining of a masculine position of mastery, and a recalcitrant identification with the colonial enterprise.

The colonial situation of the analysts discussed in this chapter allows us to witness, how the price of disavowal is often paid by a neighbour. In Daly and Berkeley Hill's cases, their familiarity with psychoanalysis, and what it brought into language may even have contributed to the energy with which they shored up their place in the colonial project. Since psychoanalysis made available to them discussions about the incomplete, mortal and strange self, and tried to forge a language in which to understand this self, it also made its disturbing aspects closer and more real. If a belief in self-knowing masculinity, and a colonial civilising mission had to be upheld, then the all too real lacking self had to be excised with even more fervour.

Thus psychoanalysis itself seems to offer no guarantee against disavowal. In fact, one of the main arguments of Mannoni's essay turns on an incident when he, in a psychoanalytic session, found himself unhearing and ignoring part of what his patient had said. Recognising the futility of guarantees, psychoanalysis goes a step further to describe the kind of violence that is sanctioned when knowledge and moral positions are held up to be absolute, when contradictions and ambivalence are ejected. To pay attention to the contradictions and ambivalences, even the vulnerability of colonialists like Berkeley Hill and Daly is not to justify their actions

316. Freud, "Fetishism," *SE* 21:153.

or position. Rather this is important because they sought to rid themselves of this very fragility and contradictions in epistemic and sexual activity. Dependence and ambivalence in themselves may be an unpleasant, even ugly psychic states, but the lives of these men show that if they cannot be borne, they return in a violent form, hurting the neighbour.

Chapter Three

Learning from Experience

He and his wife and child were in the cabin next to mine, and I became painfully aware that the small girl wetted her bed and that Captain L. and his wife thought that the right way to cure her was to beat her. I had not at that time read A Child is Being Beaten *or any of the other works of Sigmund Freud, but the hysterical shrieks and sobs which came from the next cabin convinced me that beating was not the right way to cure bed-wetting.*
Leonard Woolf, *Growing: An Autobiography of the Years 1904 to 1911*

My contribution is to ask for a paradox to be accepted and tolerated and respected, and for it not to be resolved. By flight to split-off intellectual functioning it is possible to resolve the paradox, but the price of this is the loss of the value of the paradox itself.
This paradox, once accepted and tolerated, has value for every human individual who is not only alive and living in this world but is also capable of being infinitely enriched by exploitation of the cultural link with the past and with the future.
D.W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*

In an attempt to find a metaphor for the structure of the psyche, Freud turned to archaeology. He conjours up a vision of Rome to describe how various histories are preserved in the mind:

> let us make the fantastic supposition that Rome was not a human dwelling place, but a mental entity with just as long and varied a past history: that is, in which nothing once constructed had perished, and all the earlier stages of development had survived alongside the latest. […] where the Palazzo Caffarelli now stands there would also be, without its being removed, the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, not merely in its latest form, moreover, as the

> Romans of the Caesars saw it, but also in its earliest shape when it still wore an Etruscan design and was adorned with terra-cotta ante fixae.[317]

After this elaborate description of civilisational artefacts, Freud abandons the comparison, finding that it leads him to absurdity, what he wants to say about the mind cannot be conveyed through archaeological metaphor. In Chapter 1, I discuss Freud's non-linear account of temporality, his interrogation of civilisation, and exploration of group psychology. In this Chapter, I will discuss the autobiographical writings and psychoanalytic work of Wilfred Bion which furthers Freud's attempt to think through these questions, and offers powerful insights into colonialism. A British psychoanalyst who spent the first eight years of his childhood in colonial India, his writing offers a marked contrast to the work of Daly and Berkeley Hill in how it represents the colony. In Bion's literary writing and psychoanalytic theorisation, I find a productive counterpoint to the positions of mastery and superior knowledge that Daly and Berkeley Hill tried to take up in their work. The contrast that Bion's work offers is, I think, an important reminder of the possibilities of an ethical negotiation of colonial history.

Commenting on Freud's analogy between archaeological investigation and psychoanalysis, Bion wrote that it "was helpful if it were considered that we were exposing evidence not so much of a primitive civilisation as of a primitive disaster. The value of the analogy is lessened because in the analysis we are confronted not so much with a static situation that permits leisurely study, but with a catastrophe that remains at one and the same moment actively vital and yet incapable of resolution into quiescence."[318] This is progressive temporality perceived as disaster, and Bion eschewed the progressivist account of both the psyche, and politics. His understanding of temporality is indicative of a dialectical relationship between historical experience and psychoanalytical theorization in his work. Like Freud, Bion used history and politics as ways of engaging with the psyche. By allowing the concerns of their time to shape their work, Freud and Bion articulated the relationship between historical experience and psychoanalytic theory in a way that allowed them broach new frontiers in their thinking. Freud's theorization of the death drive followed upon the First World War. This altered, fundamentally, his

317. Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents, SE* 21:69.
318. Wilfrid Bion, "Attacks on Linking" in *Second Thoughts* (London: Karnac, 2007), 190-191.

model of the mind. Previously, he had suggested that the human subject was governed by the pleasure principle. The new model of the mind that he would develop tried to account for something exceeding, something beyond, the motivations of pleasure. As we shall see, experiences of war and colonialism also shaped Bion's psychoanalytic work, and provided urgent impetus for thinking.

Parthenope Bion Talamo has written that her father's wartime experiences may have allowed him to theorize the psyche in a non-teleological manner. Rather than suggesting that there was a past to which the subject could return, Bion, like Freud in his archaeological metaphor, conceptualised the psyche as being made up of elements from different times that co-existed. The adult never sucessfully superceded the child, rather, the psychical functioning of an infant or child was present in the adult. In a short note titled 'Analytic Techinique', Bion writes: "Winnicott says patients *need* to regress, Melanie Klein says they *must not*: I say they are regressed…".[319] People did not have to go back to an earlier system of psychic functioning – these responses were available to the subject, and Bion experienced this at first hand during the war. The psyche that the patient brings into therapy is, to use Bion's word, a 'palimpsest.'[320]

Bion's own writing, especially in his autobiographies, has a palimpsest-like quality. Here, British colonialism in India, and the First World War are two historical moments that remain 'actively vital' and 'incapable of resolution into quiescence' like the 'primitive catastrophe' that Bion described. Like Walter Benjamin's famous angel of history, Bion looks back to see "wreckage upon wreckage", and we are asked to bear witness to the extent of the disaster.[321] Bion's description of a catastrophe at the heart of the human subject that remains vital is a response to Freud, but it could equally be read in dialogue with Walter Benjamin. Writing about Paul Klee's painting, 'Angelus Novus', Benjamin describes how the angel's face "is turned toward the past".[322] The angel sees a catastrophe "which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet". Benjamin writes that the

319. Wilfred Bion, "Analytic Technique" in *Cogitations* (London:Karnac, 2005) ,182.
320. Bion, "Analytic Technique," 182.
321. Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" in *Illuminations* trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken 2007), 257. For discussions of Benjamin's essay, see Michael Löwy, *Fire Alarm: Reading Walter Benjamin's 'On the Concept of History'* trans. Chris Turner, Verso 2016; Howard Caygill "Walter Benjamin's Concept of Cultural History" in *The Cambridge Companion to Walter Benjamin* ed. David Ferris Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2004.
322. Benjamin, "Theses," 257. All subsequent references in this paragraph refer to this page.

angel "would like to stay" but is propelled forward by a storm: "This storm is what we call progress". This discussion of the Klee painting is part of Benjamin's "Theses on the Philosophy of History", which were written in the shadow of the Second World War. In these dense, compact fragments, Benjamin offers a rousing and evocative critique of progress and civilisation, writing that "[t]here is no document of civilisation which is not at the same time a document of barbarism."[323] This was a view that Bion shared—with Benjamin, he encourages thought at times and in situations when such uncompromising contemplation of history and present circumstances may have been most unbearable.

'Mysterious Sweetmeats': the Enigmas of Childhood

Towards the end of his life, Wilfred Bion wrote two autobiographies. The expansive California landscape surrounding him evoked India, where he had spent his childhood years. This is where the story begins. In her Foreword to the autobiography, Francesca Bion, the author's collaborator and wife, writes that many generations of the Bion family had served in India: as missionaries, administrators, and in the Indian Police. It is very much a colonial childhood that Bion describes, where the cast of characters include not just the author's parents, but also a retinue of 'native' servants: the ayah, the kitmetgar, the bearer.[324]

The reader is immediately struck by Bion's language: associative and playful, we are in the presence of a narrator who has an idiosyncratic relationship to time, and is uncertain about his own feelings and opinions: "[o]ur ayah was a wizened little woman who, in so far as I connected age with her at all, was assumed by my sister and me to be very old, much older than our father and mother. We were very fond of her, perhaps more fond than of our parents. On second thoughts, perhaps not.

323. Benjamin, "Theses," 256.
324. The Hobson Jobson gives the following definitions of these words: Ayah: "A native lady's-maid or nurse-maid. The word has been adopted into most of the Indian vernaculars in the forms āya or āyā, but it is really Portuguese. [These again have been connected with L. Latin aidus, Fr. aide, 'a helper.']"; Kitmetgar/ Kitmutgar: "Hind *khidmatgār*, from Ar—P. *khidmat*, 'service', therefore 'one rendering service'. The Ango-Indian use is peculiar to the Bengal Presidency, where the word is habitually applied to a Muslim servant, whose duties are connected with serving meals and waiting at the table under the Consumah, if there be one."; Bearer: "the word has two meanings in the Anglo Indian colloquial: a.) a palanquin bearer; b.) a domestic servant who has charge of his master's clothes, household furniture, and (often) of his ready money." Henry Yule and A.C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo Indian Words and Phrases, and of Kindred Terms, Etymological, Historical, Geographical and Discursive* (London: John Murray, 1886), 42; 486; 77.

[…] *she* was not less than say, two or maybe three hundred years old".[325] Bion's narration of his childhood also conveys a feeling of isolation. This is the inevitable isolation of a child in an adult world, someone who is still stumbling into language. The implications of this become clear when Bion's father gets him a train that runs on electricity. The child asks "a mass of questions about electric city".[326] The exchange leaves both father and child disappointed. The adult is excited about the wondrous power of electricity, the child is enthusiastic to find a location for this wondrous 'city' which he links to the Biblical stories he has been told as a child: "Simply City; Electric City; Green hill far away where our dear Lord was 'crucerfied' and died to save us all".[327] They use the same word, but their language leads them down separate paths. In the style that Bion employs to reconstruct his childhood, language always seems to lead elsewhere – as though it is difficult to keep stitched together a word, a sound, with what it is meant to denote.

If language is tricky, so are social interactions. The narrator can see that society, like language, has its laws, but he is not able to get his bearing amidst them. Always getting himself into trouble, he cannot quite wrap his head around why adults act the way in which they do. Bion runs into trouble for asking one of the men at his father's club for an ice cream: "[t]hat *had* made my father angry. People got angry very quickly and suddenly especially about nice things like ice-cream and lying on your tummy and 'wiggling'."[328] Bion's attempts at masturbation, what he calls 'wiggling', are met with inexplicable behavior on the part of his parents: "[t]o my growing surprise I was seized, stripped by my mother and dumped in the tub! […] What had she wet me for, since I was dry to start with?".[329] The period of his childhood that Bion reconstructs is what Christopher Bollas identifies in a child aged between four to six as the 'Freudian Oedipal era', a time when " contributions from many previously latent sources now impinge upon the child who must consider them."[330] Maternal containment is given up for psychic complexity–which, as Bion's autobiography shows, also involves a taking in of myth, politics and unanswered questions.

---

325. Wilfred Bion, *The Long Week-End* [Henceforth *LWE*] (London: Karnac, 2005), 9.
326. Bion, *LWE*, 13.
327. Bion, *LWE*, 14.
328. Bion, *LWE*, 25.
329. Bion, *LWE*, 26.
330. Christopher Bollas, "Why Oedipus" in *Being a Character: Psychoanalysis and Self Experience.* (London: Routledge, 1992), 229.

I find that Bion, in his memoirs, turns to the figure of the child who doesn't yet comprehend what is going on around him as a strategy of alienation. *In The Long Week-End*, the child is not an innocent pitted against the cruelty of the adult world, as Bion allows the child both aggression and deceit. Rather, this is a child who has not yet been completely interpellated, who remains yet on the margins of ideology, even as he desperately attempts to place himself squarely inside it: "[t]he previous Christmas I had been asked what present I would like. I had set my heart on a Union Jack. When it came I did not know what to do with it. It seemed silly only to wave it."[331] One of the literary strategies for the depiction of this inadequate interpellation is the baffled narrator, whose voice throws into relief the absurdity and injustice of colonial arrangements because it cannot understand them. In his autobiographical writing Bion takes on as a strategy of anti-imperial insight the very childishness that Claud Daly identified as the flaw in native character that needed prolonged colonial rule.

When the 'electric-city' train, gifted to Bion by his father, stops working, one of the servants, a bearer, tries to help by oiling the dysfunctional machine with ghee, "the best butter" as Bion calls it.[332] The sight of the train, oiled and left out in the sun in the hope of a cure, calls forth the ire of Bion's father. The beating of 'native' servants was not uncommon in colonial India, and the diaries of memsahibs frequently discussed the practice.[333] The child, accustomed to his father's anger and its consequences, identifies, in that moment, with the bearer: "I feared. I wanted to tell my friend the bearer to run, run for his life".[334] Even though the blows don't fall, as they do earlier in the story when Bion is "given a good beating"[335] for being naughty, even though the "bearer was miraculously saved"[336], someone has to take the blame, this happens to be the aged and ageless ayah: "*She* it was who had told him about electric 'terains'. Her head trembled as the storm beat about her, but like a

331. Bion, *LWE*, 20. For an account of interpellation, see Louis Althusser "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus (Notes Towards and Investigation)" in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* trans Ben Brewster. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), 85-126. For a discussion of the role of guilt in the Althusserian account of interpellation, see Denise Riley, "Linguistic Unease" in *Words of Selves: Identification, Solidarity, Irony*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 76-86.
332. Bion, *LWE*, 16.
333. Nupur Chaudhari, "Memsahibs and their servants in nineteenth century India" *Women's History Review* 3, (1994): 549-562.
334. Bion, *LWE*, 17.
335. Bion, *LWE*, 11.
336. Bion, *LWE*, 17.

reed shaken by the wind she bowed to its fury and it passed her by."[337] In fact the *ayah* usually took the blame: "[t]he great advantage of the ayah was that although grown up she could be dealt with."[338] The childhood that Bion describes is strange – strange because the world is as such for a child trying to find a place in it, stranger because the relations between the people who surround him are odd, to say the least. The *ayah* is an adult, but she takes the blame, she can be 'dealt with'. The child is confronted with a capable adult who does not seem to have authority. At the same time, authority, and the power to punish both children and 'natives', accrues to seemingly incapable adults like his parents: "[p]erhaps some things were too old even for the grown-ups. It did not occur to me till many years later that any of those in a position of authority could be called on to solve problems that were too old for them."[339]

Bion's parents tried to raise him insulated from pagan beliefs and practices: "my father and mother were afraid I would 'get ideas' if I were allowed to have contact with any kind of 'pagan superstition' at variance with the pure, unsullied belief of our puritan and their missionary forbears [sic?]".[340].Yet the narrative constantly emphasizes Bion's failure, as a child, to act like the representative of empire he is being raised as. Being walked back from school, he sees two young girls engaged in a kind of play where they lick each others' tongues: "my ayah was shocked; she clearly did not think it right for ruling- class white children to behave like that."[341] Bion doesn't ask his parents about what he has seen, having learnt by this point that "(t)he Master Race *did not* behave like that".[342] This failure to inhabit his proper position, which I have described as a failure of interpellation, opens up the possibilities for the recognition of an other. Interpellation, in the Althusserian sense, is a process of subjectification. Our discussion in the previous chapter has showed us how, in the colonial situation, certain subjectivities were founded on the erasure of others, even as they were haunted by their very excisions. Bion's autobiography suggests that the failure to be a solid, self-identical subject was fortuitous. The child,

337. Bion, *LWE*, 17.
338. Bion, *LWE*, 12.
339. Bion, *LWE*, 14.
340. Bion, *LWE*, 15.
341. Bion, *LWE*, 20.
342. Bion, *LWE*, 20. This calls to mind Freud's discussion of 'civilized sexual morality': forms of harmless pleasure that are prohibited, things must not be spoken or acknowledged. I discuss this essay by Freud in Chapter One.

in Bion's narrative, has learnt that there is duplicity involved in holding up the shibboleths of empire. Failure becomes the basis for insight.[343] Bion allows himself to identify with those whom he is meant to despise: his "low caste, untouchable" companions, "like my ayah and my friend Dhunia the sweeper" rejected both by the British and by upper caste Hindus. These identifications, which psychoanalysts and memoirists like Claud Daly and Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill tries to smother, are allowed a transformative place in Bion's literary writing.

At this point, it would be important to recall that Bion's narration of his childhood is a reconstruction. In the Preface to his autobiography he writes: "I know that the most I can claim is to be 'relatively' truthful. Without attempting any definition of terms I leave it to be understood that by 'truth' I mean 'aesthetic' truth and 'psycho-analytic' truth".[344] I have suggested that the baffled narrator who presents to us Bion's childhood is also a means of presenting to us colonial injustice, and that in the narrative we can find a story of the failure of interpellation and the possibility of recognition. I would like to add that Bion also offers us some resources on how to think about such a transformation might come about.

Much of this has to do with Bion's portrayal of a curious creature named 'Arf Arfer'. In Bion's playful rendering of the linguistic experience of childhood, 'Our Father', who resides in heaven, turns into "Arf Arfer Oo Arf in Mphm", an onomatopaeic god-dog responsible for all kinds of trouble. The figure of 'Arf Arfer' links Christianity, the terrifying aspects of Bion's father, and aspects of social convention that the child in the narrative doesn't yet understand. When 'Arf Arfer' shows up, Bion knows that he or someone else is going to be punished. Yet he is not entirely sure what makes this figure show up, and lives in terror of it: "[s]ometimes in my dreams I thought I heard Arf Arfer arfing. It was a terrible frightening noise. Once I saw jackals sitting in a circle while one gave the 'fiaow' call. It was bloodcurdling. 'That's Arf Arfer' I thought."[345]

---

343. Denise Riley's comment on contemporary identity politics resonates with the point I'm trying to make:

> A lack of fit between my self-description as a social subject and my presence as a political subject is not disappointing but benevolent, insofar as the subject of political language actually requires a certain impersonality, or a nonidentity, to be able to circulate productively at all. In this sense, my awkward navigations to *become*, coupled with my constitutional failure to fully *be,* are what actually enable political thinking and language[…].

Riley, "Introduction" to *The Words of Selves: Identification, Solidarity, Irony*. P.5

344. Bion, *LWE,* 8.

345. Bion, *LWE,* 13.

‘Arf Arfer’, I would like to suggest, can be read as a possible dramatisation of the process of the formation of the superego. In the previous two chapters, I have discussed Freud’s critique of the superego. Bion’s writing underscores my argument about the superego as an intolerant, colonizing entity:

> But I *did* like asking questions. This made people go arf, arf, arf. Once they thought it so funny it made me frightened and angry. I felt hot all over and made up my mind to keep my questions to myself.
> "You must learn to keep your mouth shut", said my father harshly.
> I was astonished. "But, Daddy, I *always* keep my mouth shut! Why must I keep it shut?"
> "There you go again! Just when I have told you not to!"
> This defeated me. I was about to ask him another question when I found myself crying instead. I thought it time to run away; he did not like it when I was a silly little cry-baby.

The superego is the entity that stills dissent. Bion not only shows the negative aspects of authority but also a strategy for eluding its tyrannical rule: an ironisation of the ‘superego’. Bion’s writing shows up the terrifying, ‘Our Father’ to be ridiculous: an ‘Arf Arfer’. Bion manages to escape the threat of authority when his sister and him are able to laugh at it. In *The Long Week-End,* the obviousness of ideology is made strange, while the commands of the law are rendered comedic.

Added to the confusion of authority that Bion describes, is the enigma of exchange. Indians who come with baskets of fruit and sweetmeats are thanked, but their gifts are never accepted: “I was used to the never-to-be-broken rule that neither my father, nor mother, nor sister, nor I, nor any servant of the household was to accept a gift of any kind”.[346] Yet one day an Indian man appears with a silver cup as a present for the child, and the gift is accepted. The child never sees the cup again, despite asking his parents for it, and he never finds out where it came from: “When the Indian had gone my questions started. “Why did he want me?” “What is the cup for?” “Who was he?” “Where…?” But my parents were uncommunicative.”[347] The reader shares the experience of inhabiting an unresolved engima with the child-self

346. Bion, *LWE,* 15.
347. Bion, *LWE,* 15.

that Bion creates to narrate his experience of India. These questions, which are about inequality and political conditions, remain unanswered in the child's narrative. They form the base from which spring the later critiques in the book. The enigma that Bion communicates to the reader is an effective literary strategy for the representation of childhood, though it is also possible to see in Bion's style of narration an allusion to the process of an analysis. The analysand can only offer their speech piecemeal, making retrospective reconstruction a crucial part of the process. As we shall see, it is when he writes of the First World War that Bion's descriptions of India at the beginning of the memoir acquire added gravity as a critique of colonialism.

The mysterious loaded trays of sweetmeats and fruits which were refused by Bion's family, acquire added meaning against the backdrop of the famines that had starved large sections of the Indian population in the period that the text describes. They are an enigma for the child who sees them being refused, and because the narrative is from the point of view of a child, they are also an enigma for the reader. One interpretation available to the reader is to see them as symbolic of the excess of material comfort (so much, that it could be refused) that certain sections of the British could enjoy in India. To allow the reader to inhabit the enigma, Bion uses polyvalent and condensed images in his writing– his childhood memory also offers an image of plenitude that is in stark contrast to the scarcity of food that Bion describes in his war memoirs.

'A Curzon-like form with leather exoskeletenous sheath': Imperialism and anti-knowledge

In his essay "A Theory of Thinking" [1962], Bion turned his attention to the question of how we develop a capacity to think. He argues that thinking is an apparatus developed in order to cope with thoughts, which precede thinking, rather than being its product. A thought itself is the result of an expectation that meets with frustration: "an infant whose expectation of a breast is mated with a realization of no breast available for satisfaction."[348] Thought is born out of frustration, and the ability to sustain being frustrated. The absence of a satisfactory object is crucial, as it is only when something is missing that it can be thought. Yet the capacity to think

348. Bion, "A Theory of Thinking" in *Second Thoughts* (London: Karnac, 2007), 210.

transforms the experience of frustration: "[a] capacity for tolerating frustration thus enables the psyche to develop thought as a means by which the frustration that is tolerated is itself made more tolerable."[349] Born out of lack and frustration, thought is not opposed to feeling, but is itself an indubitably emotional experience. It is this frustrating experience of thought, Bion writes, that allows us to learn from experience. When the frustration cannot be tolerated, Bion suggests that thoughts are felt to be bad internal objects that must be evacuated. One of the consequences of this is that the ability to distinguish the other from the self is compromised, since the absence that distinguishes them from one's own self cannot be held in mind. Another strategy to avoid frustration is "the assumption of omniscience".[350] To avoid the difficulty posed by the process of thinking and learning from experience, "[o]mniscience substitutes for the discrimination between true and false a dictatorial affirmation that one thing is morally right and the other wrong."[351]

Bion develops his theory of thinking further in *Learning from Experience* [1962] developing a critique of forms of knowledge that are too certain, that exhibit an excess of conviction in themselves. An activity that can only be known as a continuing process, thinking does not end with the possession of a thought. According to Bion, knowledge can only be the process of getting to know something, the moment it turns into the feeling of being in possession of a piece of information, then it is no longer knowledge, but its opposite. This state of certainty is what Bion refers to as –K (minus K). Here, the painful and frustrating process of getting to know something is modified into the resolution of possessing a piece of knowledge about something: "a misrepresentation of an emotional experience that makes a striving for fulfillment appear as fulfillment."[352]

In *Learning from Experience*, he writes: 'If a sense of reality, too great to be swamped by emotions, forces the infant to resume feeding, intolerance of envy and hate in a situation which stimulates love and gratitude leads to a splitting that differs from splitting carried out to prevent depression. It differs from splitting impelled by sadistic impulses in that its object and effect is to enable the infant to obtain *what later in life would be called material comforts without acknowledging the existence*

349. Bion, "Thinking," 210-211.
350. Bion, '"Thinking," 214.
351. Bion, "Thinking," 213.
352. Wilfred Bion, *Learning from Experience*, (London: Karnac, 1984), 49.

of a live object on which these benefits depend.'[353] Even in his most dense metapsychological texts, Bion therefore is concerned with the question of why people act as though material benefits do not rely on the existence (and labour) of live objects. Once again, we are returned to the question of a relationship to an other. Even though Bion's immediate concern in this book is not to answer this particular question, it accompanies the discussions of thinking and knowledge which the book addresses, as though one set of questions calls forth the other. Its unresolved nature places it within the category of what Bion, contrary to the common usage of the word, would call knowledge.

In his memoir, the use of the enigma in the description of the childhood in India demands that the reader engage in an active process of thinking and making links, rather than receiving a story that can be mastered or possessed. At the age of eight, Bion was sent away from his parents and his beloved ayah, to school in England. He describes a period of ill-adjustment and misery: "I learned to treasure that blessed hour when I could get into bed, pull the bedclothes over my head and weep."[354] The description of boarding school forms a bridge, in the memoir, between the child in India, and the youth on the battlefield in WWI. This also where Bion begins to articulate the links between the violence of the First World War, and colonialism. He offers an illustration of forms of certainty as defences against thinking: "[t]he sonorous and impressive phrases of the headmaster, the mobilization of 'Christian So-ho-ho-holdiers marching on to-hoo war' was premature, immature grasping for certainty where no certainty was. Had I wanted to erect a primitive phallic, visual image to worship it would have taken a Curzon-like form with leather exo-skeletonous sheath to take the strain imposed by an inadequate spine."[355]

The phallic, visual image of a Curzon like form, the apt idol to represent the ideals of British boarding school education, was founded on a denial of lack and uncertainty. Bion links this desire, one could say hallucination, of certainty with an abdication of ethical responsibility. An exo-skeleton of righteous conviction, made up of a jingoistic identification with war and religion, 'Christian so-ho-ho-holdiers' resolves too soon, and too neatly, the dilemma posed by an enigma. Just as thinking is born out of frustration, it also relies on being able to tolerate a paradox, to

353. Bion, *Learning from Experience,* 10. [emphasis added.]
354. Bion, *LWE*, 34.
355. Bion, *LWE*, 48.

maintain an enigma and keep it productive.[356] The consequences, at an institutional level, of not being able to do this, were manifested in the bullying culture of boarding school and the devastating effects of colonial policy. The phrase 'Curzon like form' refers to Lord Curzon, Viceroy and Governor General of India 1899-1905, when Bion was a child there.[357] Lord Curzon was infamous for presiding over the territorial re-division of the Bengal and Orissa provinces in 1905, despite protests which were violently curbed by the British administration. It was also under Curzon's rule that millions died in a famine in British India – two years after Bion was born.

Bion links the so-called moral markers of British civilisation–education and Christianity–to a form of cultic idol worship. The 'primitive phallic' image that Bion presents the reader with is not the idol of some tribe in a far away land. Instead, Bion locates 'primitivity' in the heart of the British colonial enterprise – a gesture that locates at the centre of the civilised subject the primitivity that he would locate elsewhere in the world, and himself claim to have transcended. Bion condenses into a few sentences about boarding school life both a critique of India's colonial administration, as well as a forewarning of the war to come.

The claim to moral superiority made by British colonisers can be understood as what Bion would call 'omniscience'. Their moral certainty was a form of 'omniscience', a means of avoiding thinking about their situation, and ever so often, a sanction and justification of violence. The self assured morality of omniscience was a result of the inability, or refusal, to bear the pain and frustration of thinking and learning from experience. This takes us back to previous discussions of the super-ego in relation to Berkeley Hill and Claud Daly's claims to superiority. Their sense of superiority relied, to a great extent, on their belief that they were better informed than the native populations, that they were representatives of a more advanced knowledge system, and in Daly's case, this superior knowledge was psychoanalysis itself. To think of knowledge and thinking as emotional and uncertain is to give to these categories very different meanings and implications to

356. Bion's emphasis on frustration and enigmas is echoed in Donald Winnicott's discussion of the transitional object. See Donald Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (New York: Routledge, 2005)
357. Margot Asquith, writer and diarist, wife of H.H. Asquith, British Prime Minister in the years 1908-1916, described Curzon's expression as one of "enamelled self assurance". A popular rhyme about Curzon, attributed to JD Mackall and Cecil S. Rice goes thus: "My name is George Nathaniel Curzon,/I am a most superior person,/My cheek is pink, my hair is sleek,/I dine at Blenheim once a week." All quoted in David Gilmour, *Curzon: Imperial Statesman*, (London: John Murray, 1994), 30.

those attributed them by colonial psychoanalysts like Claud Daly and Owen A. R. Berkeley Hill.[358]

'Justice and Glory and So Forth' : War Memoirs

After the First World War, Bion wrote a set of diaries recounting his experiences with the Royal Tank Regiment in France from 1917-1919. He joined the army at the age of eighteen, soon after leaving school. In *The Long Week-End* he describes how the decision to join up was made all the more urgent by the constant mockery that a boy of his height and build faced in the streets of London when seen in civilian clothes. In these diaries he tries to come to terms with what he had witnessed in over two years of active fighting. Not written with the aim of publication, these diaries were intended as an offering to Bion's parents, to whom he had found it impossible to write letters during his time as a soldier. His autobiography tells us that the war was a matter of honour for his parents, especially his father, who said "our war is just"; "we should fight with clean hands".[359]

Bion was to learn otherwise. His daughter, Parthenope Bion Talamo, writes that "Bion continued to buy books on warfare, histories of war, memoirs of partisan warfare and so on right on up till his death, as though the subject was never far from the suface of his mind, perhaps constituting, in its social and individual components, a great unsolved puzzle."[360] Incidents recounted in the *War Memoirs*, the title under which these diaries were published, late in Bion's life, also find their way into Bion's autobiography. It is as though he had to work through them, over and over again, because they presented new questions each time. Once again, Bion does not settle for any easy answer to the questions that these memories pose.

---

358. Jonathan Lear makes a similar argument about psychoanalysis:

> "what makes analysis special is its unique form of not already knowing. […] Analysis is not essentially a body of esoteric knowledge; it is a peculiar form of mental activity, a peculiar form of speaking and listening, a peculiar form of life. Above all, it involves a certain form of listening: listening to oneself, listening to another. And if we listen to the culture with an analytic ear, we can gain insight both into the culture and into our fundamental psychoanalytic myths."

Lear, "Knowingness and Abandonment: An Oedipus for Our Time" in *Open Minded*, 34.

359. Bion *LWE*, 110.

360. Parthenope Bion Talamo, "Aftermath" in *War Memoirs* by Wilfred Bion (London: Karnac, 1997), 312. Francesca Bion also writes in the "Introduction" to the book: "Bion's remarkable physical survival against heavy odds concealed the emotional injury which left scars for many years to come. (It was clear that that war continued to occupy a prominent position in his mind when, during the first occasion we dined together, he spoke movingly of it as if compelled to communicate haunting memories.)" *War Memoirs,* 2.

After time spent in England training, and learning about tanks, Bion was sent into active fighting. Though proud, at the time, to go overseas as part of a battalion, Bion describes "reminiscences of night time fears when I was small in India" when waiting at La Havre to be sent to the front.[361] He describes the nightmare of the Third Battle of Ypres, stumbling in rain through a desolate landscape, treading through men who may have been dead or alive for all he could tell. With increasing time spent on the front, by 1918 Bion describes himself in a state where it was difficult to keep a bearing on reality: "[i]t was a weird business – the heat, and the nightmares out of which one started up suddenly in a kind of horror to find the sweat pouring down one's face. It was almost impossible to distinguish dream from reality. The tat-tat-tat of the German machine-guns would chime in with your dream with uncanny effect, so that when you awoke you wondered whether you were dreaming. The machine-gun made you think everything was genuine, and only by degrees you recovered yourself to fall into uneasy sleep again."[362] Bion found himself "looking forward to getting killed" feeling that dying was the only way in which he could have some agency amidst the "unknown powers" who persecuted him: "[a]fter all, a mouse must feel that it is one up on the playful cat when it dies without making any sport for its captor."[363]

Though he was a decorated, and, one might say, successful officer, Bion writes in his diaries about a conversation, on the battlefield, with one of the soldiers under his command: "[w]e both found we were by no means keen on the war and its justice and glory and so forth–which is obvious a good distance away, but not quite so obvious close to the real thing."[364] Glory, then, was a too quick resolution to the question of war, the suffering it caused. Bion watched a fellow soldier die and wrote in his diary: "I didn't see then, and I don't see now, why that fellow and many like him should have been taken from their English homes (and their German homes) to die for a squabble they didn't understand and couldn't realize. […]The sooner people realise the criminal folly of their leaders the better."[365] Bion's writing used the visceral, gory brutality of the war to question jingoistic patriotism.

361. Bion, *LWE*, 117.
362. Bion, *War Memoirs*, 99.
363. Bion, *War Memoirs*, 99.
364. Bion, *War Memoirs,* 38.
365. Bion, *War Memoirs,* 38.

The 'criminal folly' of leaders that Bion castigates indicates his awareness of how upper class Englishmen had offered up the lives of young men to their ideals of patriotism and empire. In *The Long Week-End*, memories of the First World War are placed within the first section on India, which is narrated from the point of view of a child. This creates a dissonance in the text, because the narrating self seems split between the child existing in the present moment in India and a voice that is able to remember the propaganda of the First World War even before it has happened. In the following extract, for example, the past continuous and present tense are used to narrate events that would have been concluded by the time Bion was writing:

> Soon I would be in England which was full of little boys, brave boys like Havelock and Outram – not like me. "Shsh…", my mother was saying. "It's only a dream. Go to sleep dear […] I don't suppose it made much scar on my mind because I do not remember a time when I wasn't a sissy. Even Outram and Havelock, and the girl who heard the bagpipes in Lucknow, and Nicholson with his beard and stern eyes scared me stiff. *Your King and Country Need You*, thundered Kitchener from the hoardings – but that was years and years later.[366]

This layering of elements from different times links the First World War to colonial experience, by pointing out the nationalism that bound the two. The supposed heroes of the revolt of 1857, James Outram and Henry Havelock were meant to be ideals for the young English boy growing up in India. Bion draws a straight line from them to jingoistic British nationalism at the time of WW1. To understand the significance of Bion's formula, we can turn to a literary example. The link between Havelock and the First World War is made with very different intention by Peter Walsh in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* [1925]. Watching young boys in uniform march up Whitehall, he thinks of the "great renunciation" that unites him with the boys, and which unites the boys with the "exalted statues" of Nelson, Gordon and Havelock.[367] Not just role models for the English boy in India, these imperial 'heroes' were part of the physical landscape of London. Amidst Peter Walsh's sentimental admiration, Woolf conveys her opinion of the boys in uniform:

366. Bion, *LWE,* 29.
367. Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* (Broadview Press, 2012), 51.

"drugged into a stiff yet staring corpse by discipline."[368] Bion would use similar descriptions for the army in his memoirs, calling it a "primitive brute"[369], a "strange religion" around the "sinister idol" of the Lewis gun.[370] What Bion shows us, in this image of a frightened English child being consoled by his mother in British India, is the future as it was shaping itself in the present. And the future, the war, as we have seen, is the most dense, bitter part of Bion's autobiography.

Just as he makes a link between the First World War and colonialism, Bion also connects the everyday, normalized violence of 'peacetime' to the dramatic loss of life in war. When Bion's diaries were published, they were accompanied by a commentary written in 1972, in the form of a dialogue between Bion and his younger self. The two voices, called 'Myself' and 'Bion', go over the diaries and interpret them in light of what has happened since.

> BION: We held Ypres
>
> MYSELF: No. Peace broke out with its customary virulence. With heavy industry idle, workers rotting for lack of work, we 'prepared' to fight another war without arms, without training, without spirit. We did NOT "keep on" holding Ypres. And now we slither to our Niagara. This time it is not a dream.[371]

Bion's voice echoes critics of the war like Bertolt Brecht and Rosa Luxemburg, who, on the other side of the war, had articulated the connections between imperial expansion, war, and class oppression. The lyrics of the famous 'Kannonensong' in Brecht's *Die Dreigroschenoper* put forward this critique:

> Soldaten wohnen
> auf dem Kannonen
> Vom Cape bis Couch Behar
> Wenn es mal regnete
> Und es begegnete

368. Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, 51.
369. Bion, *LWE*, 123.
370. Bion, *LWE*, 201.
371. Bion, *War Memoirs,* 208.

Ihnen ‘ne neue Rasse
’ne braune oder blasse
Da machen sie vielleicht daraus ihr
Beefsteak tartar[372]

Yet these very men, brutalised by their war experiences, are abandoned by the army: “John ist gestorben und Jimmy ist tot und George ist vermisst und verdorben /Aber Blut ist immer noch rot, für die Armee wird jetzt wieder geworben!”[373] In the commentary that follows the diary entries in *War Memoirs*, Bion’s present day persona (‘Myself’) disagrees with the share of blame Bion apportions to his immediate senior officers, preferring instead to lay responsibility at the door of what he calls the ‘Establishment’. The translator and psychoanalyst Paulo Sandler has commented that in his discussions of the ‘Establishment’, Bion developed Freud’s account, in “Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego”, of the Church and Army. This ‘Establishment’ was not just a sociological description, rather, it could be introjected, and “instil habits of mind, established forms of thinking and non thinking” that were repetitive and addictive.[374]

In Bion’s memoirs, in the institutions that surround him—the family, boarding school and the army—the assumption of a masculine position is wound up with the taking on of imperial ideals. The reader can see Bion chafe against these ideals–from his childhood, through boarding school and in the army. Towards the end of his unfinished second memoir, *All My Sins Remembered,* this ideal explodes. Bion describes himself on holiday in Alfriston. Taking a walk by the shore he sees his former fiancée with a new lover. He fantasises about having a gun and shooting

372. Bertolt Brecht, *Die Dreigroschenoper* (Berlin: edition suhrkamp, 1968), 31. The following English translation is provided by Eric Bentley in *The Threepenny Opera* (London: Mass Market Paperback Evergreen, 1964), 28:

‘What soldiers live on
Is heavy cannon
From the Cape to Cutch Behar
If it should rain one night
And they should chance to sight
Pallid or swarthy faces
Of uncongenial races
They’ll maybe chop them up to make some beefsteak tartare’

373. Brecht, *Die Dreigroschenoper*, 32. From the translation cited above: “John’s gone west and James is dead/ And George is missing and barmy./ Blood, however is still blood red:/They’re still recruiting for the Army.”

374. Paulo Sandler, *The Language of Bion: A Dictionary of Concepts* (London: Karnac, 2005), 276.

the man, and maiming the woman. He then writes: "[o]f course, in England you are not supposed to support your claims to masculine superiority by force – not unless you have a platoon of troops and an unarmed crowd on which to test your machine guns."[375] A few pages before describing this incident, Bion mentions the massacre at Jallianwallah Bagh in 1919, when General Dyer "'saved India by timely order to fire' at Amritsar. Of course some Indians got killed, but India was 'saved'".[376] The incident Bion refers to was the infamous killing, by the British Indian army, under the orders of General Reginald Dyer, of over a thousand unarmed people gathered in a public park in Amritsar in 1919. Fearing an uprising, the British administration had put the state of Punjab under martial law, which curbed the right to assembly. Information about the imposition of martial law was not widely disseminated so those gathered at the park included both political protesters and pilgrims celebrating the holy day of Baisakhi. In his description of the incident, Bion shows the underside of 'civilised sexual morality'–the restrained chivalrous masculinity of the suitor in England is accompanied by the permission to shore up this masculinity by firing at unarmed women and children in the colony, gathered at a peaceful demonstration in a walled park, with armed soldiers closing off the only exit.[377]

The psychoanalyst and feminist scholar Juliet Mitchell has argued that the 'legitimate' violence of war–the killing of other combatants on the battlefield, within the framework of certain rules and prohibitions, is always accompanied by illegitimate violence. This she defines as attacks on non-combatants, as well as sexual assaults on women. As war lifts the prohibition on killing–otherwise forbidden (or strictly regulated) in human societies, Mitchell argues that it also releases other forms of violence that are otherwise prohibited.[378] In his descriptions of the war, in both *War Memoirs* and *The Long Week-End*, Bion mentions an incident at the village of Bohain, where he sees a young French girl who has been raped by German soldiers. She gives birth to a baby soon after the British forces arrive in the village: "I had never seen, and never want to see again, such misery and

375. Wilfred Bion, *All My Sins Remembered* (London: Karnac, 1991), 30.
376. Bion, *All My Sins,* 28.
377. WW1 and its colonial antecedents were written into this incident as well. Even though the order to fire was given by a British General, the soldiers firing were native recruits who had returned from service in Europe.
378. See Juliet Mitchell "The Law of the Mother: Sibling Trauma and the Brotherhood of War" *Canadian Journal of Psychoanalysis* 21, No1 (2013):145-159.

horror disfigure any face."[379] He adds that he had "seen terrible things before, but there had always been some relieving feature – fearful mutilations at least meant escape from war, and death was no hardship. But from *her* misery there seemed to be no release."[380] The girl continued to haunt his dreams all his life.

Having situated Bion amongst critics of the war, I would like to reiterate that amongst those who survived the war, it was also possible to assimilate the war experiences to a narrative of progress and civilisational superiority. Claud Daly is a case in point, as is Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill, whose memoirs, as we have seen, present a very different account of the war from Bion's. Unlike Berkeley Hill and Claud Daly, Bion owned up to the shameful, inglorious aspects of war, and chose to preserve them for future generations. The question here is of what the coming generations would find available to them as a means of interpreting the past. Or, like the title of one of his psychoanalytic books, the task was one of learning from experience.

The Psychosis of Everyday Life

When Wilfred Bion was a child in India, he went on a tiger hunt with his parents. After the tiger was killed, its mate circled the camp for days and "roared her requiem".[381] The child Bion asked his mother "if she thought Jesus loved the tigress" and when his mother, after some hesitation, said yes, he was relieved, because "he did not want the tigress to be lonely".[382] At this point in the narrative, Bion mentions a painting that his family owned, which depicted some animals and a child. He compares this painting to Picasso's 'Family of Saltimbanques'–the figures in both paintings 'stood about doing nothing'.[383] 'Saltimbanques' is an image into which we can read the questions that shape Bion's writing. In the painting, not only do the figures stand about doing nothing in particular, they also seem disconnected from each other, no two gazes meet. Moreover, each figure is accompanied by an odd selection of objects. The little girl has a basket of flowers and pretty pink dress but no shoe. Another unshod boy carries a black drum. He casts no shadow on the

379. Bion, *War Memoirs*, 191.
380. Bion, *War Memoirs*, 191.
381. Bion, *LWE,* 22.
382. Bion, *LWE,* 22.
383. Bion, *LWE,* 23.

ground. A woman sits with a vase that seems to fade into the air–as if suspended between the realm of ideas and tactile objects.

Bion's psychoanalytic writing concerned itself extensively with questions raised by psychosis. As a psychoanalyst, Bion was interested in the ways in which people, like the figures in the painting, look past each other, without noticing the other's existence or recognizing a shared reality and common ground. In his clinical work Bion encountered the capacity of the mind to populate the world with bizarre objects which seemed to occupy a space between the inner psychic world and external shared reality–calling into question, by their very existence, this distinction between inner and outer. These experiences in clinical work led him to theorize the process of thinking and the apparatus of consciousness in a manner that could take on board the questions posed to psychoanalytic theory and practice by psychosis. In his study of fetishism, Freud had found that the withdrawal of reality seen in psychosis was more widespread than it had, at first, seemed to be–it was manifested across a broad spectrum in forms of disavowal and fetishism. Like we saw with Mannoni, Berkeley Hill and Claud Daly, questions of disavowal and fetishism are particulary foregrounded in a colonial context, which was the setting for Bion's childhood experiences.

Bion was amongst the first analysts to extend the practice of the talking cure to patients diagnosed with psychosis, and this is one of the reasons Bion's psychoanalytic work is considered truly ground-breaking.[384] This was a departure from Freud's work as a clinician, as Freud thought that psychoanalysis could only be practiced with patients suffering from neurotic disorders.[385] Bion argued that all subjects have a capacity for psychosis, that there is a psychotic and non-psychotic part of the personality. He attributes 'omniscience', discussed previously as a response against the pain and frustration entailed by thinking, to the psychotic part of the personality. Bion argued that the analyst could address herself to that part of the patient's personality that was not psychotic, however absent this part of the psyche may seem to the observer.

The distinction between neurosis and psychosis hinges on the question of the contact with reality sustained by the suffering person. The common account of

384. See Donald Meltzer, *The Kleinian Development* (London: Karnac, 1998).
385. See Freud, "Psychoanalytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia" *SE* 12:3-82.

psychosis suggests that it involves a schism from what is accepted as reality. Bion's account of psychosis challenges this. In his theory, sense perceptions (called beta 'ß' elements) are transformed by the psyche through a process called the alpha function. The alpha function is a kind of constant process of dreaming, which the subject is engaged in, whether awake or asleep. It transforms perceptions into a form of unreality, and creates a distance from immediate sense perceptions, allowing them to be used by the psyche. In psychosis, Bion argues, this function is almost missing or very underdeveloped. For the psychotic, there is no transformation of, no escape from sense perceptions. In the experience of psychosis, reality is all too real.

The person who is not psychotic does not have a better grasp of reality– rather, she has greater doubts about reality, and is able to grasp that she will never be able to apprehend the thing-in-itself. A psychotic relation to reality is characterised by absolute conviction in the truth of one's perceptions. The capacities for reverie, for daydreaming, for being absent-yet-present to oneself are lost. In the individual suffering from psychosis, the pressure created by sense perceptions that cannot be avoided, that cannot be transformed, is immense and a cause of great distress.[386]Bion argued that everyone has a capacity for psychosis, which may not seem apparent, but can manifest itself in group relations, or in institutional cultures.

His experience of groups and institutions characterised by omniscience, by an unshakeable conviction in their worldview, such as the British in India, and the army, may have allowed him to see psychosis not just in the seemingly 'mad' person, but also in so called 'normal' people and organisations. This universalisation of the capacity for psychosis allowed him to conduct therapeutic work with individuals suffering from psychosis, and it was also used by him to develop a critique of institutions that functioned in a psychotic manner.

Bion placed considerable emphasis on collective mental life: "for a man to lead a full life the group is essential".[387] His investigations into group psychology first took the form of group work with soldiers during the Second World War, and Bion carried on this work after the war at the Tavistock Clinic. He wrote that no "individual, however isolated in time and space, should be regarded as outside a

386. See Christopher Bollas, *When the Sun Bursts: The Enigma of Schizophrenia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015) for a powerful account of psychoanalytic therapy with patients diagnosed as psychotic.
387. Bion, *Experiences in Groups* (New York: Routledge, 1961), 53.

group or lacking in active manifestations of group psychology."[388] The very use of language required a passage through the political. Writing about the problem of 'publication', that is, the process by which something private is made public, Bion identified two dimensions to it—the emotional and technical. He wrote that the "[t]he emotional problems are associated with the fact that the human individual is a political animal and cannot find fulfilment outside a group and cannot satisfy any emotional drive without expression of its social component" and that this need for the social comes into conflict with narcissistic impulses, creating a conflict between "narcissism and social-ism".[389] The technical aspect of the problem of publication is "concerned with expression of thought or conception in language, or its counterpart in signs".[390] This suggests that at the heart of language is a political conflict, one between narcissism and social-ism. The content of these terms, 'narcissism' and 'social-ism' is not provided, neither is the nature of the conflict described. However, what remains with the reader is Bion's awareness that language, and speech, always carries traces of discontent in the spheres of political and social life, and that entering into social identifications is as difficult as it is necessary.

In the group, like in the individual, Bion noticed psychotic tendencies. He described these as the 'basic assumption' phenomena in a group, which were characterized by split off mental functioning, an absence of the sense of time, and a reluctance to learn from experience. He identified three forms of basic assumption phenomens: 'dependence', which manifested itself in the group's belief that it was gathered to rely on, and derive sustenance from a leader; 'pairing' which was the feeling of messianic hope for an unborn leader or unrealized ideal, which required that this leader or ideal never arrive; and 'fight or flight' a state in which immediate release and satisfaction was sought, whether as flight from the situation or the release of uncontrolled aggression. A group organized around a basic assumption was bound together by 'valency': "a capacity for instantaneous involuntary combination of one individual with another for sharing and acting on a basic assumption".[391]

While Freud focused attention on the group centred around the figure of a leader based upon the figure of a primal father, Bion did not have one single template for the leader of a group. Drawing upon the idea of 'valency', he suggested

388. Bion, *Groups,* 132.
389. Bion "Thinking," 221.
390. Bion "Thinking," 221.
391. Bion, *Groups*, 153.

that the leader of a basic assumption group may in himself be nothing much more than a screen of empty place: "an individual whose personality renders him peculiarly susceptible to the obliteration of individuality by the basic-assumption group's leadership requirements."[392] Or, instead of a leader, a group organized around the basic assumption of dependence could turn to the history of the group, what Bion terms "Bible making" instead of a personified leader.[393] The purpose of the basic assumption group was to avoid learning from experience, as this was felt to be painful and disruptive of the status quo. Dependence and messianic hope were both ways of avoid this painful process of growth. Flight and fight were also in the service of this end, and Bion pointed out that they were not two distinct responses but the same: "[f]light offers an immediately available opportunity for expression of the emotion in the fight-flight group and therefore meets the demand for instantaneous satisfaction—therefore the group will fly. Alternatively, attack offers a similarly immediate outlet—then the group will fight."[394] Rather than Freud's group, which comes together around the leader, Bion saw the leader of the group as someone who sanctioned emotional states already existing in the group: "[t]he fight-flight group will follow any leader (and, contrary to views hitherto expressed, retains its coherence in doing so) who will give such orders as license instantaneous flight or instantaneous attack."[395]

This has implications for how we view historical or collective responsibility, and Bion suggested that when group members stayed silent in response to feelings or suggestions articulated only by a few members of a group, they were in effect, giving their consent to what was being articulated. He thought of group mentality "as the pool to which the anonymous contributions are made, and through which the impulses and desires implicit in these contributions are gratified."[396]

Bion was interested in helping both the group and the individual to find expanded possibilities of thought and learning. In addition to his powerful account of psychosis in groups and individuals, Bion's work concerns itself with the ability to make links. Psychosis, Bion argues, is characterised by attacks on links–elements

392. Bion, *Groups,* 177.
393. Curzon, whom Bion saw as the epitome of anti-knowledge, had a strong sense of history and was known for his identification with previous Viceroys of India: "he described some of his predecessors in terms that might almost have been autobiographical". Gilmour, *Curzon,* 165.
394. Bion, *Groups,* 180.
395. Bion, *Groups,* 180.
396. Bion, *Groups,* 50.

that join associations, and allow for feelings to be linked to each other. The consequence of an avoidance of lack is an inability to think, as discussed earlier, and this leads to the splitting of perception and experience into tiny components, all in the service of avoidance. The task of the analyst is to allow for these splits to be reintegrated, and to help the patient undergo the consequent pain of this linking, which would make the fact of absence and lack more prominent. As we have seen, Bion's memoirs are also a process of linking, of making connections between histories of war, colonialism and class exploitation which are all too often split off from each other in the service of a self idealising establishment.

In his work on alpha and beta elements, and links, Bion is concerned with the process of transformation. He is not a reparative or optimistic thinker, and his work offers no easy way out of psychic and political dilemmas, but he theorises, not just psychosis, but also ways of learning from experience, of understanding and inhabiting complex histories. I have argued that his own memoirs were such a reckoning, but as a warning against idealization, it is important to remember that Bion's political critique was something that developed over the course of his life. Even though this critique structures the memoirs, so that the childhood and war are seen through its frame, this was not the case in the chronology of Bion's writing. Bion's experience of the First World War led to a critique of colonialism in his war diaries, but after some years this awareness had been buried. Writing in 1940, when he was an army psychiatrist, Bion uses a very different set of images to describe colonialism:

> In this country, mother of a colonial empire, most of us have been familiarized with stories of pioneering in distant lands, of caravans trekking great distances and being attacked by Red Indians and other foes. Cannot this heritage be capitalized? Most of us remember how, when the alarm sounds, the men folk rushed to their weapons, a circle of carts was formed as a palisade, and the women fell to their allotted tasks of ammunition carriers, nurses and even warriors. The fight over, the attack beaten off, the march was resumed.[397]

397. Wilfred Bion, "The War of Nerves: Civilian Reaction, Morale and Prophylaxis" in the *Complete Work of Wilfred Bion* 4 (London: Karnac 2014), 11-12.

This is a much more romantic and naïve understanding of colonialism, and this kind of romanticised colonial imagery is used to evoke some rather conservatively gendered ideal of menfolk rushing to their weapons. There is a world of difference between this set of images and the memoirs. This article serves as a reminder that experience in itself does not lead directly to political awareness, or the critique of unfair institutions, rather, the work of critique and transformation has to be ongoing. Bion began his intensive psychoanalytic work after the Second World War, and there was a dialectic between Bion's psychoanalytical work and his interpretation of historical events, a process that was alive to the possibilities of change. In the work of analysts like Claud Daly we have witnessed psychoanalysis put into the service of colonial ideals. Bion's work shows how psychoanalysis, despite the subject's capacity for self-delusion and self- idealization, can help create the conditions for an ethical position towards an individual and collective history.

I find in Bion's work not only a profound critique of British imperialism, but also a way of interpreting the work produced by psychoanalysts who identify with the project of colonisation. Histories of colonialism frequently discuss it as a project of gathering and producing knowledge–and the vast colonial archive certainly bears witness to this. Thinking psychoanalytically can allow us to complicate this concept of knowledge. The idea of the unconscious challenges the assumption that knowledge equals mastery, and shows that attempts to align the two together are bound to produce their own forms of suffering and failure. Bion's work allows us to think of the process of knowing not as an exercise in administration or governance, but as insight, openness and the beginnings of ethical transformations.

Chapter Four

Heads and Dreams

Until that hot afternoon when I toiled up the steps, I had never seen the house or garden, yet as I walked the lawn it was as if something at least was persistently familiar. That night I looked again at the illustrations in the Assam monographs— The Sema Nagas, The Ao Nagas, The Angami Nagas*. Then at last I knew. It was the neat darunta [sic] hedge rimming the compound like a line of privet, squat, cosy and suburban. Of all the natural beauties in the Naga Hills, it is the hedge which has been most lovingly and regularly photographed. Sometimes it provides the romantic background for a set of witchcraft figures. Sometimes its well-clipped outlines provide a decorous setting to a warrior's glory. Sometimes it looms dim but visible beneath the compound clothes-line while Naga cloths dangle their differences in the glum light. Even when Sema boys wrestle and a chief stands proudly to attention, the hedge remains neat and gentle, a pointer to another land where the Nagas are huddled in museums and the head-taker is only a specimen.*

Mildred Archer, Journal deposited in the European Manuscripts division of the India Office Library

& if they ask you about life on the reservation
if they say they want to hear about stilt houses
and the dry clack of rain on bamboo
and the preservation of tribal ways
give them a slaughter.

Mona Zote, 'Rez'

He had known what tortures the savages had prepared
For him there, as he calmly pushed open the gate
And entered the wood near the placard: 'TAKE NOTICE
MEN-TRAPS AND SPRING-GUNS ARE SET ON THESE PREMISES.'
For his father had protected his good estate

James Fenton, 'The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford'

In *Totem and Taboo* [1913], Freud describes the treatment of a head gathered by the Sea Dyaks of Sarawak in a successful head hunting expedition: "for months after its arrival it is treated with the greatest consideration and addressed with all the names of endearment of which their language is capable. The most dainty morsels of food are thrust into its mouth, delicacies of all kinds and even cigars."[398] A connoisseur of cigars himself, Freud is quick to warn his reader against imputing to these observances, "which strike us as so horrible", any desire on part of the victors to ridicule the severed head.[399] Indeed this example is adduced to Freud's argument that even amongst "savage and half savage races" [den wilden und halbwilden Völkern] the killing of an enemy is accompanied by observations and taboos. [400] The reader is expected to receive this with surprise, as Freud thinks that "we may be inclined to suppose that savage and half-savage races are guilty of uninhibited and ruthless cruelty towards their enemies."[401] Freud drew his example of the head hunting savage from Frazer's book, *The Golden Bough*.

This chapter takes us to the North Eastern frontiers of colonial India, where certain administrators, readers of Freud and Frazer, were engaged not only in describing, but also in governing the practice of head hunting. While I draw examples from the Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, later designated the Chief Commissioner's Province of Assam, my primary focus is on the region known as the Naga Hills. [402] Home to the Nagas—a name with uncertain etymology used to group together tribes that often spoke distinct languages, this territory attracted considerable anthropological interest over the years.[403] The ethnic groups living in

398. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 17:37.
399. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 17:38.
400. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 17:37.
401. Freud, "Totem and Taboo," *SE* 17:37.
402. "India under Crown rule, after the revolt of 1857-8, began to implement a policy of separate treatment of the provinces on the North Eastern Frontier. The difficulty with which these regions and polities were annexed to the British territories resulted in their gradual isolation, regulated by the Inner Line (1873), the McMahon line (1914), and the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas (1935), and later affirmed by a separate schedule in the constitution of independent India." Gunnel Cerderlōf, *Founding an empire on India's North Eastern Frontiers 1790-1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 6.
403. Lt. Colonel R.G. Woodthorpe wrote:

> Various derivations have been given for the name Naga, some supposing it to come from the Bengali word *Nangta,* in Hindustani 'Nanga' = 'naked'. Others think that the *Kachari* word *Naga* = a young man= a warrior, supplies the name; while others again derive it from '*Nag'*= 'a snake.' Not one of these derivations is satisfactory, nor does it really concern us much to know more about it, seeing that the name is quite foreign to and unrecognized by the

the hills in this region were considered reservoirs of uncorrupted primitivity: "among these primitive hillmen some have still retained 'their customs of primeval antiquity', and present to the modern observer a picture of what man was in the childhood of human civilisation. To the modern student each of the tribes of Assam present opportunities for lifelong research and investigation."[404]

This shift in location allows us to take questions relating to civilisation and temporality further, by exploring historical and theoretical conjunctions of psychoanalysis and anthropology in colonial India. Due to the fascination the region and its people held for anthropologists, we find that many of the conversations between psychoanalysis and anthropology in India, which we will be examining later in this chapter, also involve the Nagahills. While John Henry Hutton (1885-1968), James Mills (1890-1960) and William Archer (1907-1979) all held administrative positions in the North East, other anthropologists like Cristoph von Fürer Haimendorf (1909-1995) and Verrier Elwin (1902-1964) visited the region and wrote about it. Their sense of excitement, of an encounter with something extraordinary is palpable in their writing. Describing a visit he made with Cristoph von Fürer Haimendorf, the 'Baron', to the village of Chongtore in 1936, James Mills wrote in a letter: "[y]ou can imagine how thrilled the Baron was at achieving the anthropologist's ideal, and visiting villages no white man had been to before. […] the children will have lots to say later—people of an entirely strange colour wearing

---

> *Nagas* themselves. They have no generic term for the whole race, not even for each of the various tribes constituting this race.

in *The Nagas in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. Verrier Elwin (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 47. W. Robinson wrote:

> The origin of the word Naga is unknown; but it has been supposed by some to have been derived from the Sanskrit word *nagn* and applied in derision to the people, from the paucity of their clothing; but there seems little foundation for this etymological derivation, as the term has never been known to be applied by the Bengalees to either the Khassias or Garos, with whom they were far better acquainted than with the Nagas; and besides, the Garos especially are habitually accustomed to a greater degree of nudity than any of the Naga tribes with whom we are acquainted. Whatever the origin of the word Naga, it appears that the appellation is entirely unknown to the hill tribes themselves. The inhabitants of these hills are divided into numerous communities or races; and they know themselves by the designations of their respective tribes only, and not by any name common to all the races.

Nagas in the Nineteenth Century, 84.

404. SK Bhuyyan, *Speech made by Prof. S.K. Bhuyyan in proposing Dr. J.H. Hutton to the chair, on the 13th anniversary of the Kamrupa Anusandhana Samiti (Assam Research Society) held at Gauhati on October 27, 1925*. Typescript. Box 3, Hutton Papers, Pitt Rivers Museum Collection [PRMC]. For more on the Kamarupa Anusandhana Society and SK Bhuyyan see Bodhisattva Kar, "The Tragedy of Suryya Bhuyan", *Biblio* May-June 2008, pp 26-27.

entirely strange clothes, must be too much to take in all at once."[405] As discussed in Chapter 1, in Freud's writing, mentions of the primitive are found alongside discussions of ambivalence and ethics, notably in *Totem and Taboo*. I find that there is a fundamental difference between Freud's use of anthropology, and the use of Freud by anthropologists working in the province of Assam in colonial India, not least because the men I write about in this chapter were also colonial officers leading punitive expeditions against the very people who were the subjects of their ethnographies, or landowners demanding labour and taxes from their 'primitive' tenants. An ideal of progress frequently sanctioned the violence that was unleashed in the region, taking us back to discussions of the superego, and aggression sanctioned by morality.

Assam, a meeting place for such a concentration of anthropological notables, also foregrounded, in its politics, questions about primitivity. Always a cause of some anxiety in the colony, the maintenance of the division between primitive and civilised became the cause of particular concern in India in 1905, eight years before the publication of Freud's *Totem and Taboo*, which as I have argued, offers a new mode of thought in relation to the category of the 'primitive'. The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed the creation of the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam in British India, under the supervision of Lord Curzon, Viceroy and Governor General of India. In the Introduction, I suggested that this historical moment can help us situate Girindrasekhar Bose amongst Bengali intellectuals invested in ideas of 'progress' and 'civilisation' and understand his invocation of the savage who "goes out head hunting merely for the pleasure of it."[406] In the protests and petitions by Bengali activists against the territorial re-division there was noticeable unwillingness to being assigned to the province of Assam, which was considered, as Bodhisattva Kar has pointed out, a 'primitive' region populated by 'savage' tribes: "it is no light matter for 11 millions of people to be driven to *a strange land* (…) and to be forced to form an alliance with *a strange people with whom we have nothing in common*".[407] This territorial re-division brought to the surface anxieties about primitivity and civilisation, which congealed around the creation of the new

405. James Mills, *The Pangsha Letters: An Expedition to Rescue Slaves in the Naga Hills* (Oxford: Pitt Rivers Museum, 1995),10-11.
406. Girindrasekhar Bose, *Everyday Psycho-Analysis*, (Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1945), 27.
407. Sitanath Raybahadur, quoted in Kar "Deprovincialising Assam," 47.

province.[408] The colonial government, architect of this division, itself had worries about this poorly mapped province—its boundaries not clearly demarcated, its inhabitants not fully incorporated as subjects of the colonial administration.[409]

After Curzon's territorial re-division scheme was implemented in 1905, the Lt. Governor of the newly created province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, E.J. Bampflyde Fuller, commissioned a project to undertake ethnographies in this "museum of nationalities".[410] Colonial administrators, and occasionally Christian missionaries, were called upon to produce accounts of the people they were governing, or trying to bring under governance. John Hutton and James Mills published monographs in this series, and in his "Foreword" to Hutton's monograph *The Sema Nagas*, Henry Balfour commends this scheme initiated by the Government of Assam: "[e]ncouragement of ethnographical and ethnological research is one of our most crying needs. The material is abundant, since we are responsible for the welfare and progress of peoples whose very varied culture-status ranges from that of the Stone-age savage to the highest civilisation."[411] Ethnographies published in the Government of Assam scheme were ordered according to a scheme prescribed by the government, the 'Contents' page of all the ethnographies used the same divisions, part of an attempt to produce a more efficient catalogue of knowledge on the 'primitive', who was seen as data to be filled into pre-existing concerns and categories. Amongst these, we find questions of knowledge, civilisation and governance, three themes that were knotted together in the previous chapters, particularly in relation to Claud Daly and Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill.

---

408. See Kar "Deprovincialising Assam" for a discussion of these.

409. See Ishita Dube, *A History of Modern India*, (Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 223-224.

410. E.J. Bampflyde Fuller, "Introduction" in *The Garos* by Alan Playfair (London: David Nutt, 1909), xiii. A similar opinion was expressed by S.K. Bhuyyan:

> We are fortunate, gentlemen, that we live in the province of Assam, which some call 'benighted', inhabited as it is by a diversity of races, speaking diverse languages, and professing diverse religions and customs, from the most enlightened and intellectual Aryan population of the plains down to the most primitive and unsophisticated denizens of the hills, some of whom have not as yet been brought under the humanising influence of modern civilisation, and are supposed to be still living in their aboriginal ferocity as head hunters and snake worshippers.

Speech made by Prof. S.K. Bhuyyan in proposing Dr. J.H. Hutton to the chair, on the 13th anniversary of the Kamrupa Anusandhana Samiti (Assam Research Society) held at Gauhati on October 27, 1925. Typescript. Box 3, Hutton Papers, PRMC.

411. Henry Balfour, "Foreword" to *The Sema Nagas* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1921), xv-xvi.

'Huddled in Museums'

In addition to compiling information about indigenous populations into ethnographies, the administrators also collected objects that were sent to museums. The first epigraph to this chapter is taken from the diary of Mildred Archer, wife of W.G. Archer, who was posted in the Nagahills in the last year of British rule in India. It attests to how both the ethnographies, and the colonial framing of indigenous objects, packaged the Nagas for consumption in "another land where the Nagas are huddled in museums."[412] Significant amongst these museums was the Pitt Rivers in Oxford, which was involved in procuring various Naga artefacts that are still on display to its visitors.[413] Today, the museum also serves as the repository of the papers of some of the anthropologists I discuss here. When Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers gave his collection of ethnological and archaeological objects to the University of Oxford, it was on the condition that they would be housed in a museum arranged according to a scheme approved by Pitt Rivers. The museum's collection is arranged according to levels of material culture. The lower floors display the earlier and 'simpler' examples of material culture and the upper floors display artefacts belonging to a more complex level, a scheme that shares with the Government of Assam ethnographies a belief in a hierarchy of cultures. According to Pitt Rivers, the "one great thing" to be emphasized in a museum displaying artefacts of this kind was evolution, and he saw this collection as an educational aid to further a belief in this process: "to impress upon the mind the continuity and historical sequence of the arts of life, is, without doubt, one of the most important lessons to be inculcated."[414] Or, as the poet James Fenton puts it in the poem from which the third epigraph to this chapter is taken, 'The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford': "the thesis is salutary/ And simple, a hierarchy of progress culminating in the Entrance Hall."[415]

Amongst the many objects sent from the Nagahills to the Pitt Rivers are some

412 Mildred Archer, *Journal Deposited by Mildred Archer, wife of William George Archer, I.C.S. 1931-1948*. Diary entry: 12 July, Chungtia. Mss Eur F236/353, Papers of WG Archer, Indian Civil Service Bihar 1931-47, and of his wife Mildred Archer, experts on Indian poetry and art, IORPP.
413. "Between them over the years they collected around 4000 objects for the Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford, whose Curator was Henry Balfour" writes Geraldine Hobson, James Mills' daughter. *The Pangsha Letters*, 1.
414. Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers, "Section H.—Anthropology" in *Report of the Fifty Eighth Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science Held at Bath in September 1888* (London: John Murray, 1889). 825.
415. James Fenton, "The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford," Newsletter (Museum Ethnographers Group) 16, (April 1984), 37.

head trophies, these are displayed on the ground floor, under an exhibit titled "The Treatment of Dead Enemies". On the highest level of the museum, which according to Pitt Rivers' scheme for the museum, also corresponds to objects from the most sophisticated level of material culture, is an extensive display of guns. Unsurprising, as Pitt Rivers was a military man, and a keen collector of weapons. The heads in the museum arrived after a transcontinental journey, but in a curious and important link to the history of psychoanalysis in India, the dreams that lived inside the heads of people in the Naga and Garo hills, insofar as dreams can be said to live anywhere, also made journeys themselves, by becoming collectibles, part of the data of colonisation. The colonial investment in the idea of civilisation, as well as a relationship to knowledge that was accumulative and classificatory had a part to play in shaping this history. And yet in such an historical situation where discourses of progress, evolution and civilisation seem most entrenched, writing produced by colonial administrators suggests that there was a drag, something less easily subordinated to such a narrative because of its more complex psychic content, which pulled against the epistemological and administrative certainties.

As we shall see, the presence of psychoanalysis, once again a concrete part of, and reference point for this history, can also serve to alert us to its more uncanny components, the bizarre and often self-divided nature of the projects undertaken by these anthropologist administrators. But it is in literary writing, by James Mills and the Naga writer Temsula Ao, that the civilised self finds itself undone, and the 'savage' writes back. Like the speaker in Fenton's poem suggests, if the visitors to the Pitt Rivers were to turn to their own past, "like a child entering the/ Woods of his lonely playtime",[416] they would find that the 'savage' is far more *heimlich* than they had perhaps expected. Surely it is no accident that the memory that surfaces in the concluding stanza of Fenton's poem, leads us from the exhibits in the Pitt Rivers to a country estate in England.

In the previous chapter, I discussed Wilfred Bion's distinction between minus K (a form of knowing complacency which functions as a defence) and positive K (a destabilizing and painful experience of learning). Bion used these categories to articulate a critique of colonialism, which he represented as being characterized by

416. Fenton, "The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford," 39.

minus K, identifying Lord Curzon as the epitome of anti-knowledge, a form with a "leather exo-skeletonous sheath to take the strain imposed by an inadequate spine."[417] Bampflyde Fuller, the Lieutanant Governor of Assam, who had described the province as a "museum of nationalities" wrote that "this museum has, till recently, remained un-catalogued - has, at least, been undescribed in a systematic catalogue […] five years ago the Government of Assam decided to bring together all that had been collected by previous investigators, to correct it, complete it and bring it up to date in a series of monographs".[418] Bampflyde Fuller's words: 'museum', 'catalogue', 'collected', suggest inanimate and static objects, rather than living beings with their passions and history. In the ethnologies produced by the Government of Assam and in the exchange of dreams tables between scattered anthropologists we encounter a form of minus K that was institutionalised and made policy. This form of anthropological writing, with its stamp of institutional approval, served the same purpose as the glass on a museum cabinet: to separate the observer from the observed, to prevent a dangerous touching.

'Recording Dreams of Non-European Races'

Amongst John Henry Hutton's papers at the Pitt Rivers Museum archive are some pages, divided into five columns each, with the titles "dream symbol"; "interpretation"; "informant"; "tribe", and; "remarks". A "symbol", such as "wedding", or "death of a man" is listed, an equally cryptic 'interpretation' follows—in these examples, "death", and "the successful pursuit of game".[419] The following columns record the name of the informant and their tribe. The final column, 'Remarks' compares, in a few sentences, this symbol and its interpretation with those of other Naga groups, and notes when a similar belief prevails in another place, Ireland being the most frequent comparison. Hutton lists forty six symbols, from four Naga groups. In most cases, he writes, the interpretation noted is collective and future oriented, meant to foretell something. When a 'personal' interpretation is recorded, it is because the 'dream symbol' is of significance in foretelling the personal future of the informant.

417. Bion, *LWE,* 48.
418. Bampflyde Fuller, "Introduction", xiii.
419. J.H. Hutton, *Untitled table of dreams.* Carbon copy of typescript, Box 3, Hutton Papers, PRMC.

This curious, somewhat puzzling document takes us into the history of the interaction between psychoanalysis and anthropology in England, to an instance where dreams became a site of examining and establishing racial difference. Hutton's tables were compiled in response to a letter by Charles G. Seligman, a noted anthropologist at the London School of Economics.[420] Seligman had worked as a doctor during the First World War and wrote that most of his "knowledge of dreams was gained in this country while doing 'shell shock' work".[421] He wanted data from around the world about the dreams of 'primitive' people, an endeavour that required assistance of other anthropologists. This was sought through an advert published in *Man* and by contacting various acquaintances; amongst these Henry Balfour, of the Pitt Rivers Museum. [422] Balfour put Seligman in touch with James Mills and John Henry Hutton, then working in the province of Assam in British India. At the time that Seligman contacted them, Hutton was Officiating Deputy Commissioner, and Mills the Assistant Commissioner in the Nagahills. They were well acquainted with Balfour, to whom they had sent many Naga artefacts such as ornaments, weapons, carved stones etc. for inclusion in the Museum's collection. Their monographs on the Nagas, published by the Government of Assam, were known to Seligman, who had been intrigued by the brief descriptions of Naga dreams included in them. Seligman wrote to Mills saying that he was concerned with "the psychology of non-Europeans" and hoped that records of Naga dreams that Mills, or Hutton, could gather and send him would help him in exploring this topic.

The letter was accompanied by two notes—the first discussing Freud's theory of dreams and titled "Note on Dreams", and the other meant as a set of instructions to dream gatherers, titled "Suggestions as to Method of Recording Dreams of Non-European Races".[423] In his "Note on Dreams", Seligman divides

420. After the First World War, the use of psychoanalysis in the treatment of shell shock had brought it to the attention of a wider set of British intellectuals, including anthropologists, perhaps the most well-known amongst whom was WHR Rivers, whose work in anthropology and psychology, especially during the Torres Straits expedition, drew the attention of other practitioners in the field. Amongst these was Charles G. Seligman, who, along with his wife Brenda, was acquainted with many prominent figures in English intellectual circles, including Ernest Jones and Bronislaw Malinowski, both familiar with Brenda Seligman's anthropological work.
421. Charles Seligman, *Charles Seligman to James Mills, 11 October 1923*. Copy of letter included in a letter to John Hutton, 11 October 1923. Box 3, Hutton Papers, PRMC.
422. Charles Seligman, "*Correspondence: Type Dreams: A Request" in Folk-Lore: Transactions of the Folklore Society December 1923* and *"Note on Dreams" in Man, nos. 119-120, December 1923*. Printed Matter, Box 8: 'Articles 1903-1961' C.G. Seligman Papers, London School of Economics Library Archives.
423. C.G. Seligman, *Note on Dreams.* Box 3, Hutton Papers, PRMC.

dreams into three categories, those that are "sensible and intelligible, i.e. they tell a connected story of the everyday world"; those that tell a connected story, but there is something in them that makes them seem 'unnatural', and; dreams with "bizarre, confused and non-sensical content".[424] Dreams in the first category, Seligman writes, "are often obvious and simple wish fulfilments," of the kind seen amongst children "in the white races". Of the last category, Seligman notes that "[m]uch of the strangeness of these dreams is due to the symbolism used to express the dream thoughts." The three categories are indicative of levels of complexity for Seligman. Dreams in the latter categories would be the product of greater repression: "the unnatural and bizarre elements are considered to represent a symbolic rendering of a desire or emotion which we cannot bring ourselves to admit during our waking hours".

Seligman was interested in finding out "whether the dreams of natives belong in the main to class (1) or to the other two classes, and if the latter whether they can in a general way be regarded as disguised wishes or fears."[425]In the course of his anthropological work he had noted that "natives not infrequently have dreams of class (1)." Interested in recording more dreams from the second and third category, "to find out whether any special meaning is attributed to them, i.e. is the fact of symbolism in dreams recognised", Seligman was concerned with the question of whether there are "general conventional meanings attached to particular symbols and even personal meanings". Further, he wanted to investigate whether "in the latter event does the individual consider that certain objects or animals or people dreamt of have a particular significance for him, and if so upon what experiences or fantasies does he base his belief."

Freud does indeed write that children's dreams are often constructed around a simple wish fulfilment, which Seligman lists as the first 'category' of dreams in his note. Dreams with a similar structure are also observed amongst adults, Freud writes, yet he offers a caveat to this formulation—in adults, the wish that is represented as fulfilled is rarely as simple as that of a child. In his note, Seligman suggests that the dreams of natives are like the 'simple wish fulfilment' dreams of children, while Freud cautions that even when dreams seem like an obvious wish fulfilment, when

424. C.G. Seligman, *Note on Dreams.* Box 3, Hutton Papers, PRMC. All subsequent quotations in this paragraph refer to this source.
425. C.G. Seligman, *Note on Dreams.* Box 3, Hutton Papers, PRMC. All subsequent quotations on this page refer to this source.

the material presented seems facile, this should not be taken for granted in the interpretation. The interpretation of dreams is a fragile exercise that can only take place with some integrity if the encounter can work with both the patient's resistance and transference.

This alerts us to how Seligman's study presupposed racial difference. The assumption behind his categorisation of dreams, and interest in the dreams of the 'natives' was that the primitives would have 'simpler' dreams because in their psyches less was repressed. Dreams and dream interpretation became the ground upon which the distance between the savage and civilised was to be marked out. This was Freud's theory of dream interpretation appropriated for a theory of racial difference. For colonial administrators to carry out Seligman's project, Freud's theory had to be translated and reworked. In a note titled "Suggestions as to Method of Recording Dreams of Non-European Races", which accompanied his letters to Hutton and Mills, Seligman divides the process of recording dreams into four steps.[426] This modular refashioning of Freud was supposed to enable far away men to collect some dreams in their spare time, when they could excuse themselves from the cares of administration. Seligman did not seem to expect his informants to interpret the dreams of the 'natives' they interacted with at any great length. The exercise was not meant to produce transformative meaning in a dialogic encounter. The study was ostensibly interested in both the form and content of the native unconscious—both the shape of native dreams (the way they were structured) as well as their content (the kind of images and symbols that appeared in them). Yet there is little discussion of how the form of the recording exercise would in itself have produced a certain kind of information. As I discussed in Chapter 1, this question of why any 'native' would have wanted to share their personal associations with an anthropologist, is a question that Freud poses in *Totem and Taboo*, and leaves unresolved. It is left unaddressed in Seligman's method of recording dreams, and in

426. In the first step, the dreamer's account was to be taken down in the vernacular without interruptions. In the second step, the dreamer would be asked to repeat the dream (Seligman writes that this account is likely to be more elaborate and suggestive of the latent content of the dream). Then, the dreamer was to be asked to explain the dream and his statement recorded. Finally, "unless the dream be of the obvious and open wish fulfilment type", the dreamer would be asked about his associations to the various fragments of the dream. Seligman includes a handwritten note on this page, writing that he expects that the third step is likely to provide the "conventional (i.e group) significance of the dream" while the fourth step would provide the "individual associations (i.e. personal symbolism)" though he added that "I am far from satisfied with these". *Charles Seligman to James Mills, 11 October 1923.* Copy of letter included in a letter to John Hutton, 11 October 1923. Box 3, Hutton Papers, PRMC.

the transcontinental exercise where dreams were dissociated from their dreamers, and sent to another person who would interpret them to his own end.

In an essay titled "Some Additional Notes on Dream Interpretation as a Whole" published in 1924, the same year in which Seligman would present the results of this study in a Presidential Address to the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Freud stressed the difficulties of dream interpretation. According to Freud, while there are a set of psychoanalytic theories as to how dreams may be interpreted, in practice there is no one, predetermined route to follow. Arguing that dream interpretation can only be undertaken with some integrity within the framework of an analysis, as it is the analysand's resistance that endows the process with energy and meaning, Freud maintained that dreams interpreted, as in the case of Seligman, "without reference to the dreamer's associations, would in the most favourable case remain a piece of unscientific virtuosity of very doubtful value."[427] The unconscious, in Freud's version, is not just something to be decoded, but is endowed with significance. It is in the process of being heard, as part of interpretative activity, that it both makes and resists meaning.

In January 1924, when Seligman presented the results of his study to the Royal Anthropological Institute, he thanked Hutton and Mills for their contribution to his research, for "their invaluable records of the dreams of the native peoples they know so well."[428] The study was "a purposive investigation of the unconscious amongst non-European races."[429] As Seligman discussed dreams from around the world, he ranked those who had dreamt them in order of increasing primitivity. He first discussed the dreams of Arabs, saying that it was unsurprising that these dreams seem similar to European dreams. He then gave examples from dreams of more 'primitive' African groups. Within this scale, the Nagas were classed as the "more primitive members" of the "Mongolian peoples".[430] Seligman was interested in symbols and type dreams, unlike Freud. These offered him an opportunity for "exploring the unconscious of white and other races":

427. Freud, 'Some Additional Notes on Dream Interpretation as a Whole' *SE* 19, 128.
428. Charles Seligman, "Presidential Address. Anthropology and Psychology: A Study of Some Points of Contact," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 54, (Jan-Jun 1924): 14.
429. Seligman, "Presidential Address," 35.
430. Seligman, "Presidential Address," 38.

> If it can be shown that identical symbolism (i.e. identical symbols with the same meaning attached to them) is to be found in the dreams of unrelated races differing profoundly in their civilisation and social organisation, then we shall have to admit that the unconscious of the most diverse races is qualitatively so alike that it actually constitutes a proved common store on which fantasy may draw […].[431]

The shared unconscious that Seligman 'discovered' was seen as 'store' rather than as a shared structure. Instead of the unconscious requiring potentially infinite interpretation, an idea that troubles the mastery of the analyst and renders complex the patient's relationship to the only partly knowable contents of her or his mind, Seligman posited the unconscious as a 'common store' with identifiable contents. He wrote that this shared unconscious has to be acknowledged in discussions of "the origins of myths, beliefs and even, perhaps, the simpler implements and technical processes."[432] Inferred through dream symbols abstracted and detached from a wider network of associations, this shared unconscious could still be made anterior, since as Seligman suggests in a telling phrase, its significance would at most be seen in the study of 'simpler implements and technical processes.' Likewise, as discussed previously, he writes that 'natives' may have "*even personal meanings"* for their dreams, as if the personal could not be assumed to exist in the 'primitive'.[433] Suggesting that a distinction at the level of simplicity is being maintained, Seligman also wrote that the unconscious may influence "*even, perhaps, the simpler implements and technical processes*."[434]

Behind all the frenetic collecting set in motion by Seligman's letter, there lurked the idea that if the 'native' had a simpler form of dreams, or dreams that were subject to collective interpretation, then somehow the native may be less of a 'person', or that there may be something less 'personal' about the native. Even though Seligman concludes his investigation by saying that the unconscious is indeed the same in Europeans and Non-Europeans, nonetheless via this idea of simplicity, psychoanalysis is also being appropriated for a theory of racial difference. We have arrived at the opposite of Freud's theory of the unconscious. When Freud

431. Seligman, "Presidential Address," 41.
432. Seligman, "Presidential Address," 42.
433. Seligman, "Note on Dreams". [emphasis added].
434. Seligman, "Note on Dreams". [emphasis added].

said the unconscious was an aboriginal population in the mind, that modern man is still in touch, at the core or deepest level, with what he most wishes to differentiate himself from, he opened up the possibility of an ethical relationship to the past and to the 'primitive' other, as I suggest in Chapter 1. In contrast, the question that preoccupied Seligman was whether there was a distinct aboriginal unconscious.

As Seligman's reading of Freud reduced the method of dream interpretation to a bureaucratic exercise, it is no surprise that the conclusions drawn from such a study compromised the very conception of the unconscious. Another crucial question in the practice of psychoanalytic dream interpretation, that of the aims of interpretation, was also inadmissible in the Seligman study. Colonial anthropologists saw knowledge about the 'natives' as something that had to be collected and categorized, so dreams, like other artefacts, became something that the colonial officer could traffic in. This attitude towards knowledge reduced the possibility of an ethical encounter with the 'native' other, and introduced an incommensurability between psychoanalysis, and the colonial anthropological exercises, as knowledge was seen not as transformative truth, a new recognition of self and other.

Decoding the unconscious may lead to knowledge on the register of information, but psychoanalysis emphasizes an encounter with the unconscious which has the potential to lead to knowledge with the capacity to be a transformative truth. Moustapha Safouan illustrates this distinction by differentiating the 'meaning' from what he calls the 'message' of a dream.[435] Sometimes the 'meaning' of the dream, if presented to the analysand as a decoding of her dream, may even block access to the message, which is something that the analysand may take a long time to hear and accept. This distinction that Safouan makes between these two registers of knowledge is not only relevant to the clinical practice of psychoanalysis which he emphasises, but, as we see here, also to its use as a method of cultural interpretation.

Yet these fragments of dreams also tell another history, that of being created as subjects of Empire. Collection fever was not limited to British and European anthropologists. Tarun Chandra Sinha, Secretary and later President of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society, made his first appearance in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* in 1937, where he was listed as a member of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society (IPS). Sinha was a collector of all things 'Garo': "I have in

435. Moustafa Safouan, "Lesson 4" in *Four Lessons of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Other Press, 2004), 75-91.

my collection 850 songs of different types, 502 actual dreams, 201 stories, 230 names of deities, records of 500 cases of colour and form preference and 162 photographs taken from different aspects of Garo life."[436] His anthropological fieldwork in the 1930s was conducted in the Garo Hills district amidst the Garo tribes.[437] In 1948, Sinha published an article titled "Dreams of the Garos", an attempt at "Freudian interpretation of Garo dreams showing fulfilment of repressed wishes."[438]

In his monograph, *The Psyche of the Garos,* Sinha describes Major Alan Playfair's work, *The Garos*, as "the only book of some importance in the field."[439] Published in 1909, under the auspices of the same Government of Assam scheme that had commissioned the ethnologies of the Nagas, Playfair's book collected some 'typical' dreams of the Garos.[440] Between 1909 and 1937 there was a shift in the status of dreams, from 'religion' to 'science'. Playfair describes the dreams of the Garos under a section on 'Religion.' By the time Sinha made his own collection, dreams were a topic fit for a paper that he read at the Indian Science Congress. As discussed in the Introduction to this dissertation, The Indian Psychoanalytical Society was committed to promoting psychoanalysis as a scientific endeavor, and its members were closely associated with the scientific community in Calcutta. The anthropological work done by Hutton and Mills would also have served to validate dreams as a matter of scientific interest. Though the dreams of the 'primitive' transitioned from 'religion' to 'science', on our key issues of knowledge, meaning, and the 'primitive', the place of the dream in the colonial imagination does not seem to shift.

Sinha's essay "Dreams of the Garos" included tables with material arranged under the titles 'Dream Material', 'Current Bengali Interpretation', 'Garo Interpretation', 'Remarks/Garo Interpretation Association Link' and 'Probable Freudian Interpretation.' The first column in the table, 'Dream Material' carried a three or four-word description, for example, 'snake or snake bite', followed by a few lines under the next two heads giving the Bengali and Garo interpretations. The

436. Tarun Chandra Sinha, *Psyche of the Garos* (Calcutta: Anthropological Survey of India, 1966), viii.
437. Sinha conducted his fieldwork in the 1930s, but his articles on the Garos were all published after political Independence in 1947.
438. Tarun Chandra Sinha, "Dreams of the Garos," *Samiksa* 2, no. 1 (1948): 25.
439. Tarun Chandra Sinha, *The Psyche of the Garos,* vii.
440. Playfair, *The Garos,* 115-117.

'Remarks/Garo Interpretive Association Link' were comments by Sinha, and in the example mentioned, the 'Probable Freudian Interpretation' was 'Penis, Homosexuality.' The 'Probable Freudian Interpretations' are just a list of phrases like homosexuality, castration, mother as wife, coitus with mother, female body, child birth, homosexuality with father, female genital, death of mother. These phrases may seem baffling because the word 'Freudian' places them under the sign of an entire system of interpretation and invites comparison with Freudian psychoanalysis. As accounts of the psyches of Garo subjects, these tables where the 'associations' are barely a line or two of speculation written by Sinha, do not seem 'probable', with no further commentary, no chain of associations, no potentially competing meanings.

The link with Hutton's tables is unmistakeable, though it is difficult to establish whether Sinha saw the tables that Hutton made. Also, unlike Hutton, Sinha was much more intimate—personally and professionally, with psychoanalysis. When this article was published, he was a training and control analyst with the Indian Psychoanalytical Society, their librarian, and had been a member for over a decade and a half. According to his own account in written in 1966, when discussions took place between 1922 to 1938 about the training of psychoanalysts, it was decided that a prospective analyst must undertake at least 200 sessions of personal analysis and two cases of at least 100 sessions each as control work under a senior analyst. Sinha mentions his own insistence on a minimum of at least 500 sessions of personal analysis.[441] Yet his work suggests that despite his prominent position in the Indian Psychoanalytical Society, Sinha was much closer to Seligman, Hutton and Mills in the way he approached psychoanalysis when it dealt with 'primitives'. It would not be incorrect to say that Sinha's 'Probable Freudian Interpretations' in his essay were a case of wild analysis. However this leaves unanswered the question of how an analyst so insistent on a long analysis could offer interpretations of dreams where the associations of the dreamer are absent. What were dreams made of, that they could be arranged in tables? In Sinha's article, dreams were divided into 'Good' and 'Bad', with sub-classifications for each category. In the tables, there were dreams of

441. Tarun Chandra Sinha, "Development of Psychoanalysis in India" *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 47, (1966): 427-439.

litigations, of laskars, and of men coming in boats.[442] The dreams could be read as listing a history of being created as subjects of taxation and administration, marking out the creation of the Garos as specific historical subjects, at once bureaucratically and as the focus of a psychoanalytical investigation.

In the studies by Seligman and Sinha, the value of the Garos and the Nagas came from their 'primitivity'. The very conditions of the possibility of this work, though, relied on the participation of these 'primitives' in the contemporary economy as porters and translators. Enlisting populations for labour, porterage and military duty was a part of colonial administrative practice in the North Eastern Frontier, and as we saw in our discussion of Claud Daly, in the Balochistan and the North West Frontier Province as well. Sinha, not a colonial officer, also mentions in his texts the many porters who accompanied him on fieldwork.[443] In fact the 'primitive' subject of psychoanalysis and anthropology, and the subjects of contemporary taxation sometimes got mixed up for Sinha. Describing the resistance he faced in getting the Garos to share their dreams with him, Sinha wrote: "I have some Garos as my tenants. Though otherwise very obedient and docile they refused to tell me their dreams".[444] The very circumstances that made it possible for Sinha to know what were 'docile' and 'obedient' tenants caused trouble from another quarter. Sinha mentions his initial difficulty in getting permission from the Government of Assam to conduct his work: "[b]esides Garo Hills being a partially excluded area, the then British Government were possibly more strict in my case. Here I should mention that the major portion of the Garo Hills was included in our estate, before the British Government took it away from my grandfather in the year 1872 by a piece of arbitrary legislation known as the Garo Hills Act. Since then the Government did not like our access in Garo Hills."[445]

---

442. The post of the 'laskar' was created by the colonial administration to help in tax collection and dispute resolution amongst the indigenous populations.

443. In "A Psychological Study of Colour Preference of the Garos," (1951) he describes his Garo porters smoking with the subjects of his colour-preference tests. *Samiksa* 5, no. 2 (1951): 75-120.
In his monograph he writes that his interpreter, Rojing Shangma was part of the Pioneer Corps during the First World War.

444. Sinha, "Dreams of the Garos," 23. Sinha attributes this refusal to a belief amongst the Garos, that telling one's dream brought misfortune to the dreamer.

445. Sinha, *The Psyche of the Garos,* vi. See also Parimal Chandra Kar, *British Annexation of Garohills* (Calcutta: Nababharat Publishers, 1970) and Maharaja Bhupendra Chandra Sinha, *Changing Times* (Calcutta: Anthropological Survey of India, 1965).

The grandfather whom Sinha mention was the Raja of Susung, Mymensingh district. Around 1860, the extent of the Susung estate had become a disputed matter, particularly the question of whether the Raja could continue to levy taxes on those Garos he claimed as his tenants in what had come to be designated as the Interior Garo Hills region. The matter was taken to the High Court, which ruled in the Raja's favour. In 1869, the Government enacted fresh legislation that placed the disputed tracts under the direct governance of the Deputy Commissioner of the Garohills District. Litigation, then, was something shared by Sinha and the Garos whose dreams he collected. Sinha's reader will never know whether the dreams of litigation really indicated 'hostile father,' 'child birth,' 'sexual desire' or 'impregnated womb' but the dream tables do tell the reader that the long and brutal history of border demarcation in the region was part of the context of psychoanalysis there and appears in the dreams of the 'natives'. This alerts us to the already fraught relationship between upper class landowning Indians, and laboring 'primitive' tenants, upon which colonial antagonisms were mapped. Girindrasekhar Bose used the example of the head-hunting 'savage', so that he could set up a distinction between the primitive and civilised populations of India. In Sinha's case, and as indicated in the Introduction, the lines of division do not only pass between the British colonialists and the 'native' or 'primitive' other, but also appear internally in how Indian writers, in relation to caste and class, imagine themselves. If these texts on 'primitive' dreams have an unconscious, then it is at least as much this history of labour and appropriation, as the 'psyche' of the Garos, Nagas, or other 'non western races' that they supposedly reveal.

'Fine Specimens': Headhunting

Writing on the Nagas, in English, from the mid 19th century to the early 20th century often had a tone of despair. One of the first English language commentators hoped that his writing would "lead to an improvement in the moral, as well as temporal condition of the people".[446] Much of this despair had to do with the practice of 'head-hunting', though the fierce opposition that the Naga tribes put up to British attempts to take over their land only served to strengthen the accusations and fantasies of the unchecked savagery that surrounded the hill tribes. The Nagas were

446. William Robinson, *The Nagas in the Nineteenth Century,* 39.

excellent fighters and skilled at negotiating a terrain that the British found threatening and inhospitable. The colonial victory owed much to the use of superior firepower, but the introduction of guns into the Naga Hills region by the British changed the nature of head hunting expeditions. The raids were now deadlier, with the number of people killed increasing exponentially. The presence of guns put more heads in circulation than had been previously imaginable. Paradoxically, this led to a situation which the British administrators had to manage, with the use of even more guns, resulting in a further increase in casualties.

With Hutton and Mills, there was a transformation in the way in which the practice of head hunting was perceived by colonial authorities. Previously, in the nineteenth century, Naga head hunting had been seen as a mark of the Naga's exteriority to civilisation, as a bloodthirsty and incomprehensible act.[447] From the early twentieth century on, the administrator-anthropologists tried to understand and explain this practice, locating it within a dense system of meaning. A "significant break in the official discourse", they explained it as a way of securing the social body, as a form of 'sport' and as a means to an end (whether this end be clothes, rank etc). [448] In *The Angami Nagas,* Hutton relates the practice of head hunting to the pleasure in sport and chase, and links it to the Britisher's enjoyment of shikar. The noted anthropologist Verrier Elwin commented that "head hunting was not really understood until Hutton and Mills published their books which go deep into what we may call the philosophy of the custom."[449] Yet the new, knowledge driven approach to head hunting did not completely displace the previous view of the head hunters as barbaric, and the two co-existed somewhat uneasily.

Their commitment to understanding how the act of taking a head was not simply a moment of primitive excess but a practice connected to economic, social and sacred life, governed by rules and subject to regulations, was accompanied by a change in the way in which the actual objects of hunted heads were treated. Earlier, head trophies were destroyed, but with the involvement of the anthropologists they became coveted objects. Bodhisattva Kar has carefully tracked the ways in which the anthropologists pursued and collected head trophies from Naga villages (more than

447. "Like a beast and like a child, the Naga of the nineteenth-century British archive was by and large incapable of abstraction and sociality: the human head, the primary insignia of the sovereign individual, was just another 'game' to him." Kar, "Heads in the Naga Hills," 342.
448. Kar, "Heads in the Naga Hills," 343.
449. Verrier Elwin, *The Nagas in the Nineteenth Century,* 537.

99 heads were sent by them to the Pitt Rivers Museum). In his account of the Pangsha expedition in 1936, Mills wrote: "[t]he Baron and I went into the village and had a look round. Not very interesting, they told me that Pawsey made them burn all their old heads taken when head hunting, when they were taken into the administered area. I wouldn't have believed him guilty of such an act of vandalism."[450] In fact the letters that Mills wrote during this expedition are as much an extended shopping list for the Pitt Rivers ("I got a lot of stuff for Balfour. I know exactly what he wants, just simple things that cost nothing but which fit into series"[451]) as they are an account of a military-administrative exercise.

In his lecture "Anthropology as an Imperial Study", Hutton makes a case for an anthropologically informed administration, which would be able to understand the indigenous systems of life and meaning and therefore change them in a way that would not have the same deleterious consequences as seen in past colonial interventions. This would require a specific kind of anthropological vision, capable of suspending its judgements, values and morals when apprehending a cultural system different from its own:

> For to the anthropologist all customs are natural, and even head hunting, human sacrifice and cannibalism, however necessary it may be to supress them, are not revolting and atrocious crimes but reasonable and inevitable acts resulting from beliefs and ideas logically applied to circumstances and environment. Primitive communities though often observing intricate and difficult customary rules frequently have entirely different standards from ours and base their codes on a very different corpus of information.[452]

450. James Mills, *The Pangsha Letters,* 8. During the same expedition, he also wrote: "[t]he sight of Sepoys with rifles and fixed bayonets must have been rather shaking to Yimpang's nerves, but we had a piper with us and after one of your Scottish airs the people began to look more cheerful. Hanging from the Head Tree were five heads of the wetched Saochu people they killed in the spring. As the raid was for slaves and was a gross act of treachery I was determined to confiscate them, but I bided my time till we were safely outside the very strong fortifications. A double fence with a ditch in the middle was simply bristling with panjis. Then I demanded those heads, and waited outside with my 50 rifles till they were produced. We got them and the Yimpang Head Tree is bare: and the Pitt Rivers Museum will get some fine specimens if I can ever manage to send them." *The Pangsha Letters,* 19-20.

451. *The Pangsha Letters,* 41.

452. John Henry Hutton, *"Anthropology as an Imperial Science," Inaugural lecture, Cambridge 1938.* Typescript, Box 3,Hutton Papers PRMC.

Here, we witness how the previously unknowable savage, of pre-Huttonian administration, who could only shock and horrify the colonial traveller or administrator with his barbaric and violent practices becomes completely knowable, even logical – head hunting has been transformed from an act radically incomprehensible and repulsive to the western observer, to something 'reasonable' and 'inevitable'—the result of ideas 'logically applied to circumstances'. All that needed to be done was to figure out the 'different standards' of the natives and gather and acquaint oneself with the 'different corpus of information' upon which the codes and prohibitions of the 'primitive' native were based. The cataloguing and codifying that the administration was relentlessly engaged in served this end. But the emphasis on logic and reason emptied head hunting, and no less significantly, its colonial observers, of any hint of the unconscious. Neither account of the head hunting 'primitive' acknowledges in the 'primitive' an interplay of unconscious processes and conscious decisions. The 'primitive' is either seen as pure unconscious, or not allowed to have one. The latter interpretation allowed the practices of the 'primitive' to be introduced into a system of commensurability, in which they could be exchanged for practices thought of as better, modern, or more efficient.

Anthropology offered the opportunity to understand the role and significance of an act within the culture to which it was attributed. Once the function and significance of an act found to be offensive was understood, it could be replaced by a less offensive act that was still endowed with the same significance. Hutton gives the example of a tribe where marriages stopped because a marriage proposal had to be accompanied by a man acquiring the status of someone who had taken a head, but this was not possible as head hunting had been outlawed. The administrators, Hutton notes with approval, worked to get the tribe to accept that boars' heads were a suitable substitute for human heads. Once this substitution was accepted by the tribe, social life returned to its course. Such displacements relied on the administrators' belief that they understood head hunting. In the districts that Hutton and Mills administered, the attempts to substitute heads with other objects, or what Kar calls "working along the grain" began to inform administrative policy not just in relation to head hunting, but also in enlisting labour and allegiance during the two world

wars.[453] Curbing the practice of head hunting had been a means of bringing more villages under colonial administration. The successful substitution of human heads with animal heads or other human body parts was a means of securing allegiance to this administration. During the First World War, Hutton's immensely effective recruitment drives were attributed to his skilled manipulation of the desires associated with head hunting into enthusiasm for participation in a global war. During the Second World War, successful recruitment drives worked by replacing the head as trophy with another part of the body—a finger or ear, for example. If the Nagas recruited for wartime fighting acquired these other trophies then they would qualify as warriors and have access to all the pomp and circumstance that this entailed. The administration would entice them with the opportunities that wartime afforded for such activities, and turn a blind eye to their trophies.

What then emerges is that this high risk endeavour leads straight back to the question of civilisation, as a concept fraught with ambiguities as we saw in our discussion of Freud in Chapter 1. For such an appeal to be effective, Europe was represented as a theatre of the very desires that the primitive had previously been tainted by and which modern day 'civilisation' was meant to have surpassed. This was not without risk, as the civilisation that the primitives were being inculcated into stood in danger of exposure as something relentlessly cruel. As Henry Balfour wrote in his Foreword to Hutton's book, *The Sema Nagas*:

> One wonders what impressions remain with them from their sudden contact with higher civilisations at war. Possibly, they are reflecting that, after what they have seen, the White Man's condemnation of the relatively innocuous head-hunting of the Nagas savours of hypocrisy. Or does their *sang-froid* save them from being critical and endeavouring to analyse the seemingly inconsequent habits of the leading peoples of culturedom?[454]

The fighting that took place in a far-away land during the First World War, came to Naga territory in the Second, with the most violent fighting in the region taking place during the Battle of Kohima. For all the descriptions of the Nagas as bloodthirty and violent, their lands had never seen death or fighting on such a scale.

453. Kar, "Heads in the Naga Hills," 349.
454. Hutton *The Sema* Nagas, xvii.

It is possible to read the two colonial positions on head hunting as both structured so as to allow the colonial observer an escape from an encounter with his own unconscious. Early commentators thought of headhunting as pure excess, and closed off the possibility of any similarity between the head hunters and the colonial observer. The head hunter carried all the irrational aggressiveness that the colonial observer excised from himself. In the second position, the administrator-anthropologists gave head hunting the dignity of meaning, but within a framework that could only account for conscious motivation. Made explicable within an explanatory system that saw it as a means to an end within a logical system of beliefs—a way of acquiring women, status, good fortune—head hunting was made to mirror the utilitarian logic of the colonial administrators, who then set about to replace this with a more efficiently utilitarian system. The second system was somewhat like Hutton's dream tables—even when explicitly concerned with desire and fantasy, both the administrator and the savage were presented as having no unconscious—only a set of collective beliefs each.

Furthermore, excising the unconscious can also be seen as a way of not taking up an ethical position in relation to the aggressiveness and violence of not only the coloniser but also the colonised. Psychoanalysis understands aggressiveness as fundamental to the human subject. Psychoanalysis and colonial responses to Naga head hunting bring to the fore the fact of the neighbour's aggressiveness. Without taking away from the injustice of the colonial situation, the encounter between the colonial administrators and Naga head hunters requires us to remember that a position of ethics needs to be taken up not just next to a neighbour who is passive and abused but also one who may be violent and vengeful—as colonised populations could be, not just in response to colonial oppression but also towards each other. It is difficult to imagine what shape such an ethical encounter may have taken within the frame of colonisation. And yet the question remains, of how to respond when confronted with a neighbour perceived to be violent. Is the only response one that unleashes more violence, which refuses to recognise its own enjoyment in forbidden pleasures, because it wears a cloak of morality?

Progress and Nostalgia

Administrator-anthropologists in Assam were disoriented, not just by the practice of head hunting, but also by the lack of a 'head' in Naga political systems. Their work required that there be local leaders who could be held accountable and used as intermediaries in interactions with the local populations. Troubled by a form of social organisation where authority did not seem to be clearly organised around leaders, part of the work the administration did in the region was to create these posts and figures of central authority. Hutton's tour diaries record many instances of his dissatisfaction with the people he appointed to fill the many posts that had been created. He could never be sure where someone's loyalties lay, and it was never entirely certain that the officials appointed by the British would be accepted as figures of authority by the people. To further complicate matters, the administrators were often confused by Naga villages, which were made up not just of one clan, but many, and this prevented them from being entirely sure which village was 'friendly' and which 'hostile'. Colonial administrators were convinced that head hunting had to be abolished, because 'primitive' societies had to be remade in the image of 'advanced' ones. Their interventions also reshaped structures of authority as they tried to remake indigenous society in the image of the kind of group arrangements they were familiar with, and part of. Establishing civilisation also meant establishing a structure of leadership.

This history resonates with our discussion of Freud's theorisation of group psychology in Chapter 1. In his essay *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego,* Freud discusses the formula for the "libidinal constitution of groups": a set of individuals who have identified with each other in their ego, because they have put the same object in the place of their ego ideal. [455] Within Freud's scheme, it is possible for the place of this external object to be occupied, not just by the leader in the form of a person, but by a concept, an idea. I think it is possible to suggest that this leading idea, for these administrators and anthropologists, was 'progress'. In Chapter 1, we discussed how the relationship of a group to its leader is marked by ambivalence, which has to be periodically excised and directed outside in order to maintain the group. When an idea occupies the place of the leader instead of a person, the group would have to deal with its ambivalence about this orienting idea.

455. Freud, "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego," *SE* 18:116.

If we understand the administrator-anthropologists in Assam as a group constituted around the ideal of progress, then we can see how they had to repeatedly excise their ambivalence about this leading idea. The 'primitive' was a suitable site to receive the ambivalence that had to be gotten rid of. The ideal of progress, like a vicious superego, demanded increasing sacrifice. Progress supposedly creates change, but we find that in the work of these administrator-anthropologists, it also created a profound nostalgia for what had been left behind.

Hutton's inaugural lecture at the University of Cambridge in 1938 began with a joke about how an inaugural lecture was like the 'ordeals' encountered in primitive societies when someone had to take up a higher rank or shoulder new responsibilities. Towards the end of his time in India, Hutton had begun to express concern about the impact of colonial administration on tribal people. This was at its starkest in the approaching extinction of the Andamanese, and Hutton wrote a damning critique of colonial policy which was censored by the colonial government. In this lecture, Hutton described the process of incorporating primitive societies into the British empire: "a process which may invest people of lowly and undeveloped culture with duties, responsibilities and privileges for which their past experience all but inadequately prepared them".[456] This practice had proved to be quite an ordeal, often "so severe that the novice has succumbed to the hardships involved, and, instead of attaining a fuller life in a new society of peoples, has disappeared from among the nations of the earth."

Hutton's lecture was very conscious of the time in which it was written, aware of the challenges faced in sustaining the British empire. The lecture is heavy with the knowledge of the damage wreaked by colonialism on indigenous peoples: "vast majorities of such people have been incorporated in their systems by western powers and have been, or are being destroyed in consequence." Also, the attitude to those whose lands had been colonised seemed to have shifted: "the feeling is fortunately growing in this country at any rate that dependencies inhabited by people of primitive culture are held in trust primarily for their inhabitants, and secondarily for the world in general." For Hutton, anthropology provided one of the ways of dealing with these challenges. He found that taxation, missionary work and colonial modes of administration had destroyed the fabric of indigenous life, and in doing so,

456. Hutton, *"Anthropology as an Imperial Science," Inaugural lecture, Cambridge 1938.*Typescript, Box 3, Hutton Papers PRMC. All subsequent citations on this page refer to this source.

destroyed the will of the people. Colonial administration had torn down the very systems by which indigenous people made meaning in their world, and subsequently left them in a state of "apathy, depression and degeneracy".[457]

Reading Hutton's lecture with the knowledge of British administrative policy in the Nagahills, it is difficult not to think that the 'primitive' only became an object of interest in the process of its destruction. Colonial anthropologists lamented "the remarkable rapidity with which they [the Naga tribes] are changing and indeed already have changed".[458] After destroying and reshaping the lives of the people they administered, the anthropologists described, with maudlin nostalgia, what they had ended:

> there are still across the frontier happy tribes, which have not yet touched pitch and become civilised like their administered brothers; which pay no house- tax, and do no reluctant coolie work; which know not the seed of conversion and the sword of dissension which missionaries bring, nor have yet been made to eat of that forbidden fruit which drove our first parents into fig-leaves and banishment. The diseases which follow like the jackals in the wake of invasion have not yet touched them, and they go clothed on with their modesty rather than with "dhutis." No paternal Government forbids them the taking of heads or [sic?] their fittest to survive and no profane hand is raised against the customs of primeaval antiquity.[459]

In this account of things—administration, taxation, coolie work, conversion, disease—are all happenstance, no responsibility is taken for them. The 'paternal Government' mentioned above was hardly a passive entity as regards the frontier, in fact it was actively engaged in expanding its boundaries. The transformations in administrative strategy, discussed in the previous section, did not mean a more 'humane' government. Not much changed in the way in which the villages were treated. The number of anti Naga expeditions and the accompanying activities of "[b]urning settlements, fining villages, jailing individuals, blockading communities"

---

457. Hutton, *"Anthropology as an Imperial Science," Inaugural lecture, Cambridge 1938.*Typescript, Box 3, Hutton Papers PRMC.
458. Hutton, "Preface to the First Edition," *The Angami Nagas*, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1921), vii.
459. Hutton, "Preface" *The Angami Nagas,* vii-viii.

only increased.[460] As Mills wrote in a letter to Balfour: "[i]n August or early September I expect to visit Yungya again. With any luck I ought to be able to surprise it and loot it properly, to the advantage of the P.R. I should like to fire on it, but there is the risk of hitting women and children if they have no chance of getting them away. The men deserve bullets..." [461] The representatives of civilisation, its administrators and self-identified pacifiers come to sound, and act, as violent as the 'primitive' practices they wanted to control, if not abolish. If there is ambivalence, nostalgia, a recognition of colonial destruction, it only goes so far.

There are echoes here of Leo Bersani's account of Freud's theories of the superego: "[t]he regulator of aggressiveness is identical to the very problem of aggressiveness", which I have suggested has profound links to the colonial world.[462] In leading raids against villages that were suspected of practicing head hunting, the administrator-anthropologists could both present their actions as reasonable and necessary, while enjoying the pleasures of looting villages of their possessions (particularly the prized heads), burning settlements and killing scores of people. Indeed offering an account of the aggression released by civilisation, Freud might have been describing the actions of the anthropologists who were reading his work in Assam. As the dealings of the administrators with the Nagas show, the demand to end head hunting was presented as a self-explanatory, reasonable demand. If a people were to be incorporated into a more 'civilised' state, then the 'ordeal' that Hutton joked about would involve giving up practices such as head hunting, even though the sympathetic anthropologist may provide suitably anodyne substitutes. But in the actions of the people who were sanctioned to ensure that this happened, the command to sacrifice pleasure to the state coexisted with the incitement to untrammelled aggressive enjoyment.

The encounter between psychoanalysis and anthropology in the Nagahills was therefore once more a missed encounter, insofar as nothing about psychoanalysis that would challenge the way in which the administration conducted

460. Kar, "Heads in the Naga Hills," 342.
461 James Mills, *Mills to Balfour, 23 July 1923*. Letter, Mills Papers, PRMC. Mills got his wish, writing to Balfour in September 1923: "Yungya are properly cooked this time. I surprised them and occupied the village in the process shooting one of the swine who was chiefly responsible for the whole business. Then I abode with them three days. It was unpleasant for me, but much more so for them, and they wished me gone." *James Mills to Henry Balfour, 11 September 1923*, Mills Papers, PRMC.
462. Bersani, *The Freudian Body*, 23.

its affairs was taken on board. In 1947, when the Indian nation came into being, the Nagas were categorical in the refusal to join the newly formed state, petitioning both the British and the Indian nationalists for their own nation. Their demand was heeded neither by the departing British, nor by the leaders of the Indian anti-colonial movement. In its endeavours to 'pacify' the Nagas, the Indian government turned to none other than the former colonial advisors, including Hutton and his successor Charles Pawsey. Their policies and mode of thinking returned, this time through the newly decolonized Indian nation. The manner in which the army was deployed against the Nagas, the re-grouping of villages, the destruction of granaries was a ghastly return of the colonial practices of the British. On the academic side of things, the binary between primitive and civilized continued to be propagated. The Anthropological Division of the Government of West Bengal not only published Tarun Sinha's work, but also the memoirs of his uncle.

'A Certain Uncanny Lilt': Writing the Nagahills

Classification, like civilisation, created its own discontents. The writings of Hutton et al once again bear witness to the 'other' scene of what they are describing, and trying to stabilize and enforce in their work. In his tour diaries, after concise descriptions of agricultural practices, litigants and petitioners, and villages collapsing under increased taxation and penalties, Hutton would report on the state of the Inspection Bungalows he stayed in. In one instance, the hat pegs had been tacked into the walls, rather than screwed on. Hutton left instructions for this to be remedied. Another time, the bathtub wasn't installed properly. At least the gardenias looked pretty during one of his visits.[463] In 1915, Hutton ordered the construction of an inspection bungalow at a site that the villagers warned him against. They had "said it was 'bad place'. They could give no very good reason, but said they were accustomed to make small sacrifices there to the spirit of a man who had been

463. This insistence on maintaining a certain English 'homeliness' wasn't Hutton's alone. Mildred Archer describes, with unintended comic effect, having tea-time with her husband disrupted by head-hunting Nagas: "[t[his week the villagers of Pangsha arrived to discuss their recent misdeeds. They hoped to pacify Bill with the offer to Government of a mithan—a kind of domestic bison worth about Rs 200. […] While we were having tea by the fire, Bill had three of the headmen in to discuss the matter and as we quietly drank tea and ate sandwiches, they stood peacefully by. But it was only a month since, wild with blood, they had rushed shrieking through the village street spearing women to death and seizing their heads." *Journal Deposited by Mildred Archer, wife of William George Archer, I.C.S. 1931-1948*. Diary entry: 31 July. Mss Eur F236/353, Papers of WG Archer, Indian Civil Service Bihar 1931-47, and of his wife Mildred Archer, experts on Indian poetry and art, IORPP.

drowned in the near-by Tizu river".[464] It was in this bungalow that Hutton spent a troubled night: "spoiled by a horrifying nightmare in the course of which I saw a creature like a human child with a monstrous big head creeping across the floor; the principal feature of the dream was the quite unreasonable fear which I experienced and which caused me to perspire so freely (the weather was quite cool) that my pyjamas and sheets had to be dried in the sun next day."

Later, Hutton was to find out that his close associate James Mills had a similar experience at the same bungalow: "[t]he only difference in our accounts seemed to be that whereas the creature with the big head that I had seen had unkempt hair, he had seen it bald, or it *may* have been the other way round." Hutton and Mills later sent two other people to stay at the Bungalow, to check if they had "any sort of uncomfortable psychic experience" there. One of the two men was so distressed by something that happened when he was asleep there that he chose to leave immediately and walked twelve miles to the next inspection bungalow. During later visits Hutton always felt uncomfortable in the bedroom where he had first dreamt of the creature, and Mills avoided it altogether.

Hutton recorded these experiences in a note that was never published, written after his return to England and Mills' death. The experiences he describes—the 'quite irrational fear' and the repetition of the dream, refuse to be assimilated to rational meaning. The colonial officers who experienced these hauntings would not have described themselves as 'primitive', their setting was an inspection bungalow built to modern standards, not a remote Naga village of the kind described by Hutton and Mills in their anti head hunting expeditions—surrounded by spiked panjis (sharpened bamboo sticks) with a head tree decorated with trophies inside. Rather it is amongst hat pegs, bath tubs and gardenias—the heimlich comforts of an inspection bungalow (albeit one built on a marked spot, a place of sacrifice) – that there was a return of the uncanny as that which is inassimilable to meaning – *something that should have stayed hidden but has come to light.* It is in the dreams of those who were engaged in sorting, classifying and distilling dreams that *something* surfaces and transmits itself, and holds the dreamer in the grip of an uncanny horror.

464. John Hutton, *Untitled note on dreams in an inspection bungalow in Baisho*. Typescript, no date, Box 3, Hutton Papers PRMC. All subsequent citations from this note are from this source.

Amongst the papers of W.G. Archer is a typescript draft of an unpublished story by J.P. Mills, titled, "Shakchi, Killer and Artist."[465] It tells the story of Shakchi, born to a family of warriors in the village of Hukching, as he proceeds from being a youthful warrior to a gentle middle-aged man. Written in the third person, the story begins with a sympathetic and intimate description of Shakchi's parents. Yet within the very first sentences of the story, there seems to be a division in the narrating voice. While on the one hand, the voice seeks to demonstrate its familiarity with the characters and their milieu, commenting on their dietary practices—the importance of chilies, the prohibition on pregnant women eating meat from kills—it also describes these as 'Naga custom', which suggests that the voice is outside the scene being described.

As the reader discovers, it never is made clear who the narrator is, and where he stands. Yet the description of British activity in the region as "imposing peace" makes the voice sound distant from the characters at the very moment when it seeks to speak most intimately from their point of view. In a curious moment that is left unaccounted for in the narrative universe of the story, the reader is told that Shakchi was an artist, innovating on the tribal patterns carved by his village. Then the narrator says: "[t]hey are very fine, and some of the best are in England now."[466] We do not learn how they made this journey, who procured and transported these objects. This, along with the distaste with which head hunting rituals are depicted, aligns the story with existing colonial travelogues and ethnographies on the Nagas.

Indeed, there are moments when the writing begins to sound like colonial propaganda and endorsements of British policy. Describing the ceremonial killing of a bull bison the narrator comments: "[r]eluctant though the British are to interfere with ancient customs they have felt compelled to check the awful cruelty of these

---

465. See Appendix 1 for a transcript of the story. Geraldine Hobson writes of her father's interaction with a Naga chief, who may have been the figure behind 'Shakchi':

> My father, however, had many friends among the Nagas, and his reputation for fairness and friendship extended well beyond the boundary of administered territory. For instance Chingmak, chief of Chingmei in the unadministered area, had once walked many days to Mokokchung to meet my father, and been received with great honour. They had been good friends ever since. Both Chingmak and his son bore the ornaments and tattoos of headhunters. My father's official Tour Diary says: "There is a fair collection of heads in Chingmei, the most famous being that of a Panso man who is said to have taken fifty himself. One of Chingmak's sons, aged about 25, has contributed eight to the collection." Chingmak's loyalty was to be of crucial importance during the expedition.

Pangsha Letters, 1.

466. James Mills, *Shakchi, Killer and Artist*. Typescript. MSS Eur F236/203, IORPP

sacrifices and enforce more humane methods of killing wherever their rule extends."[467] Unsurprisingly, the reader also finds in this story colonial nostalgia and desire for the ungoverned tribe away from British civilizing influence—the story is set in an unadministered Naga region beyond the Frontier.

And yet this piece of writing is not travelogue, ethnography or propaganda. The very attempt at writing the story pushes the writer into a terrain where he has to imagine and occasionally identify with what goes on in a head hunter's mind, since Shakchi the head hunter is the hero of the story. The narrator's distance from the characters shifts through the course of the story, at times appearing to occupy a position that allows it access to the point of view of the characters, for example when it describes white men: "[s]trange-looking Sahibs, with skins so pale that it seemed as if the sun had never ripened their bodies, had imposed peace on the tribes to the East and the West". That the narrator of James Mill's story seeks to convey the perceptions of Naga people when they see a white man is significant, since Mills also wrote, in a letter that I quote from at the beginning of this chapter, about the thrill of visiting a village where no white man had been before, in strikingly similar language: 'people of an entirely strange colour wearing entirely strange clothes, must be too much to take in all at once.' This involvement in the question of how a native population would respond to the white man suggests an interest, on the part of Mills, in seeing himself perceived through the eyes of another, to himself occupy the place of the 'strange', and as we shall see, the encounter between the primitive Naga and the white colonial administrator occupies a key place in the story of Shakchi.

The story wavers between portraying Naga life in a tone of colonial fantasy and horror, conveying desire, even envy of the perceived vitality of Naga life. This is nowhere more pronounced than in relation to head hunting, descriptions of which provide the story with most of its action. We are told of Shakchi's childhood in the village, seeing "raiders welcomed as they returned with their gory trophies" or going into guardhouses and looking at "rows of grinning skulls". Soon after, the death of Shakchi's father, mother and sister at the hands of head hunters from a neighbouring village is described in a somewhat maudlin tone: "he died too soon to see his wife and daughter cut down" and, "three headless bodies and a raider marked the scene of

467. Mills, "Shakchi".

the tragedy." Yet quite soon after descrbing this 'tragedy' Mills refers to head hunting as a "pleasant sport".

Later in the story, the reader is invited to witness Shakchi's exploits as a head-taker, and the narrator steps in the mind-space of the hero, describing his quest to take a head the avenge the killing of his family, and to impress his sweetheart. This head is taken in breach of a truce, but the narrating voice comments: "a head was a head […] a head got by treachery was better than none at all." And yet the narrator later goes on to link the customs surrounding this act with cannibalism: "[h]e had, of course, heard the story that somewhere in the unknown mountains to the east there was a village of men who ate human flesh […] this ceremonial meal with blood stained hands was itself a last relic of forgotten cannibalism". There is a tension between representing head-hunting as normal and thus presenting an authentic and convincing account of Naga interiority, and expressing revulsion for it. In addition to this there is an excitement surrounding head-hunting, not only because the plot keeps returning to it, but also in the way in which it is described.

At one point, describing Shakchi's married life, the narrator says: "for the next year or two only the passion that his young wife returned prevented him from finding life monotonous, though for a civilized man, to whom war is something abnormal, the constant raids and counter-raids would have provided more than enough excitement." This seems to suggest that Shakchi needed both war and sex—'the passion that his young wife returned'—for a sense of excitement while for 'civilised' man, war would have sufficed. In addition to the clichéd portrayal of the savage as having excessive appetites, there seems to be the suggestion that Shakchi didn't value war enough, or find in it the kind of excitement 'civilised' men may have been able to derive from it. Here, a feelings of pleasure, desire, envy seems to surface in how head-hunting is written of, after all, the narrator says the head hunting raids would have provided enough *excitement* instead of, say for example, worry.

This proximity between sex and violence draws attention to the gendered thematics in depictions of head hunting. In the story, as in colonial anthropology, women were seen as inciting head hunting. In Shakchi, the hero is spurred to take revenge when "he had held Aminla's firm young body in his arms and asked her if she would be his always, and she had said he could be her lover, but never her

husband till he had avenged his father and proved himself a man." Or as Mills put it in his ethnography of *The Lhota Nagas*: "[a] Lhota who died recently much desired when he was young to marry a certain Phrio girl. The minx said she would only accept him if he would take the head of a Rengma girl and show it to her as proof of his valour."[468] Women are portrayed as the fickle instigators of head hunting, repositories of a sexuality that can only be accessed through a display of violence on the part of their suitors. Yet at the same time, they are also presented as the victims of head hunting. In Mills' story, as in the wider ethnographical literature, the horror of head hunting is conveyed to the reader by depicting women as its victims. This portrayal in the colonial discourse and policy on head hunting suggested that because women were the victims of head hunting, the practice was more inhuman that other, European, wars, and punitive action against Naga villages was justified. Yet as these women were themselves morally degraded in their encouragement of head-hunting, it was not troubling to deprive them of life and livelihood by burning their villages. The reader of "Shakchi" is not introduced to the punitive practices of the Naga Hills administration, as setting the story beyond the frontier allows these incidents to go unmentioned.

Questions of sexuality are also germane to the portrayal of the male head hunter. While head hunting is depicted as an act of machismo, it is also associated with a desire for ornaments and decoration, in a way that suggests that such desires compromise the masculinity of the head hunter. Yet that the observer-anthropologist's desire was involved in this depiction is suggested by the way in which Shakchi's encounter with a white man, a colonial administrator, is described in a romantic, almost homoerotic vein:

> The contrast with the drab figure in khaki shirt and shorts was striking enough, and Shakchi's appearance is worth a brief description, for there is assuredly no finer dress in India than that of a Naga warrior. On his head was a tall helmet of the finest plaited scarlet cane, topped by an upstanding crest of scarlet goat's hair. His ears were decorated with the prized shell discs he had worn so uncomfortably that day he took his first head, and round his neck was a collar of huge boar's tushes. His naked torso showed every

468. Mills, *The Lhota Nagas,* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1922), 106. See also Kar "Heads in the Naga Hills" for a discussion of this in relation to the logic of substitution.

> rippling muscle, and round a waist that a dandy would have envied he wore a broad belt of cowries, from which hung his only garment, a little red and dark blue apron embroidered with the figure of a man in cowries. On his legs were greaves and on his wrists gauntlets of canework like that of the helmet, and polished sections of elephant tusk ornamented his upper arms. His spear was in his hand and his trusty "dao" sheathed on his back. His face was grave as he offered the Sahib a drink of rice beer, but the smile with which it was received brought an answering smile of great charm. On that day began a friendship which has never been broken, rare though meetings have needs been.

And yet, within the story there seems to exist an awareness that contact with the white man could be deadly for the Naga. On a visit to this white administrator in his guarded camp, bearing a chicken as a present, Shakchi is almost shot down by an armed guard because he does not understand the command, issued in English, to stop and identify himself. He is saved only by his squawking chicken, which the guard recognises as a sign of friendship. This is indeed a romantic gloss on the chickens, grain and other valuable supplies that Naga villages were obliged to supply to visiting colonial officers and accompanying porters and soldiers.

Both Mills' story and letter try to imagine how the Naga villagers perceived the white man. The nature of the archive is such that we cannot know what the residents of that village were thinking. And yet a Naga village visited by Mills found a way to write itself in, on its own terms, into the colonial anthropologist's writing. In a letter, Mills describes encountering a "huge powerful village, never before visited".[469] The village didn't want Mills' company of soldiers near it, so the company had to "camp well up on the spur where water is a great difficulty." The village gave to the visiting colonial contingent the usual supplies of food that were extracted from each village: "pigs and chickens, but their baskets of rice had a thick layer of rice on the top and Job's tears underneath—this is a very inferior sort of grain. All our efforts to get big bamboos for carrying water have been in vain. They just sit about, and I don't want a quarrel." Mills decided that he would do the usual thing: "[t]omorrow I am going into the village (with a strong escort). I have always

469. Mills, *The Pangsha Letters*, 34. All subsequent quotes, unless otherwise indicated in this paragraph refer to this source.

wanted to see it and I hope to get some things for the Pitt Rivers Museum." He doesn't mention the outcome of this visit, but his letter suggests that the village had its own back: "I've never seen such a village as this for ceremonial slowness. An *enormous* procession of men has just brought water and firewood and water-bamboos. Most people carried nothing, and no one more than one stick of firewood or one bamboo! It took an immense time to get this very small result, for the procession had to move slowly and chant all the time!"[470] Playing at being the ceremonious subject of anthropological investigation allowed the residents of this Naga village to frustrate colonial attempts at depleting its resources.

Finally in this chapter I turn to Temsula Ao, one of the most prominent writers of present day Nagaland. Born when the Naga Hills were still administered by the British, Ao has borne witness, in her life and writing, to the changing political and psychic landscape of the region, invoking and decisively reordering many of the themes discussed in this chapter. Her first book of short stories, *These Hills Called Home,* published in 2006, offers a way of thinking about the Nagahills that is cognizant of historical injustice but also interested in telling another story, in remembering differently: "[b]ut what do you do when it comes to someone else's memory and when that memory is of pain and pain alone? Do you brush it aside and say, it does not concern me?".[471]

The history of the administration of the Naga Hills, her stories suggest, seems marked by an inability to come to terms with the past, or to mourn and recognize an other. These themes become central to her work. She tells many of her stories in the voice of Naga women, claiming for them a complex interiority and crucial relationship to politics. In the colonial anthropology on the Nagas, the women occupy an even more shadowy place than the men. As a typical description has it: "[a]mong the women however ugliness is the rule. A pretty Sema girl is hardly to be found, […] The women generally are very short, squat and horny-handed."[472] Reduced to ethnological descriptions and photographs in the colonial archive, in Ao's writing, Naga women instead have their own stories to tell.

Her medium does not confine her to the recording of 'facts'. In a prefatory

470. Mills, *The Pangsha Letters*, 35.
471. Temsula Ao, "Lest We Forget," in *These Hills Called Home* (New Delhi: Penguin, 2006), ix.
472. Hutton, *The Sema Nagas*, 8

note she writes: "[t]hese stories however, are not about historical facts; nor are they about condemnation, justice or justification of the events which raged through the land like a wildfire half a century ago." It is by leaving the realm of verifiable fact that Ao evokes the truth of historical experience, much as Freud tried to do in his constructions in analysis. Her story "The Last Song" tells of Apenyo, a young woman with a beautiful voice and lovely hair, who continues to sing even as her church is invaded by the Indian army. The story goes on to describe how both Apenyo and her mother are raped by soldiers. The daughter is dragged by her beautiful hair. This gruesome but small detail in Ao's story is evocative of the massacre at Yengpang, described by the Naga nationalist leader Phizo :

> Among the stories told by survivors is that concerning Sibonglemla, the cheerful young woman who was the village schoolmistress. Dragged on the ground by her long and beautiful hair, which was four feet long when loose, she begged for mercy and wept, but the killers scalped her while she was still alive and then cut her head off.[473]

In Ao's story, Apenyo's voice becomes a means of resistance even as her body is being annihilated—she continues singing even as she is raped and then killed. Even after death, her voice retains its independence, not abject, not assimilated to nationalist claims ('condemnation, justice or justification'), rather returning to keep alive both memory and mourning. It is an old woman who tells Apenyo's story to the younger people in her village, who have heard of the massacre but do not have any memory of it:

> as the wind whirls past the house, it increases in volume and for the briefest of moments seems to hover above the house […] The young people are stunned because the hear the new element in the volume and a certain uncanny lilt lingers on in the wake of its departure. The old woman jumps up from her seat and looking at each one in turn asks, "You heard it, didn't you? Didn't I tell you? It was Apenyo's last song" and she hums a tune softly,

473. Phizo *The Fate of the Naga People: An Appeal to the World*. Pamphlet, published by AZ Phizo in London, 1960, in Mss Eur F236/ 230 W.G. Archer Papers, IORPP. See also "A Memorandum from Women's Association" and "Report of a Fact-finding Team" in *Nagaland File: A Question of Human Rights* ed. Luingam Luithui and Nandita Haskar (New Delhi: Lancer International, 1984), 205-208; 209-231.

almost to herself.[474]

As one of the few literary writers who concerns herself with this historical moment, Ao also takes another unexpected step. Within the political and literary landscape of India, to write about the crimes of the Indian Army and the occupation of the Nagahills regions is in itself a radical gesture. It is therefore extraordinary that Ao does not limit herself to evoking the violence of this period. The Nagas, in her stories, are neither victims nor heroes. Instead, they are allowed to mourn. The men and women in her stories suffer, not just because they have been harmed by the Indian Army, but also because they have themselves been led into harming and taking the lives of others. The characters she creates insist on mourning, even when they kill an enemy in self defence. In "An Old Man Remembers", a man who spent his youth with the Naga underground army recounts his experiences to a young boy in his village. The man describes having to turn the body of an enemy soldier which had fallen on a gun, in order to retrieve the weapon, and seeing the look of pain and horror on the young, dead face. Ao writes of the boy listening to this story: "[t]he young boy did not understand why he should be crying; after all they were enemy soldiers weren't they?".[475] The story she writes tries to provide an answer to this young boy's question. This recalls Freud's powerful construction of the primitive mourning by the body of the dead enemy. In Ao's writing, the only reparation that is carried out is by remembering and mourning the painful past. Key to this process is being able to recognize the injustices of one's own people, and Ao not only allows her characters to mourn their enemies, she also endows them with the ability to confront the failings of their own political movement.

Often, it is the women who are the bearers of insight in Ao's stories. They have the ability to look at themselves – whether it is the wife in "Saoba" who can see how the ideals of the Naga political movement have been diluted and compromised – or the young nurse in "Three Women" who dares to confront racial prejudice amongst the Ao-Nagas by adopting a dark skinned child from the tea tribes who has been abandoned by her mother. As a writer Ao tasks herself with remembering at its most historically acute and psychically powerful and complex. We could not be further from the colonial and anthropological writing discussed in this chapter. In

474. Ao, "The Last Song," 32.
475. Ao, "An Old Man Remembers," 108.

many of her stories, we find her characters in the process of narrating a significant incident, a tale or forgotten event, without censoring what surfaces into an idealized version of history. Her writing inhabits a difficult space that is both interior and exterior, trying to stay in touch with what is painful and what has been disavowed. The question with which she begins her book is about the relationship to an other, and the negotiation of a difficult past. Ao's ethical gesture is that of giving this pain form and voice. Both in their reckoning with the past, and respect for an other, Temsula Ao's stories are able to develop some of the most creative and ethical insights of psychoanalysis. These were hushed in encounters between psychoanalysis and anthropology – but return and are kept alive in the literature that is heir to this strange and dismal history.

Chapter Five

The Call of the Mother

mothers who were always a set of equipment and a fragile balance
mothers who looked over a gulf through the cloud of an act & at times speechlessly saw it
Denise Riley, from 'Affections Must Not'

Calcutta, January 12, 1924. Arthur Smith was in a tramcar passing along Chowringhee Road towards Esplanade when he heard a shot, and "saw a European stagger and fall".[476] Smith then heard several more shots and saw an Indian standing over the prostrate body of a man collapsed on the ground. He got out of the tram and chased this Indian, who had begun to run away, a taxi driver in close pursuit. The driver was also shot, and staggering, pointed Smith in the direction the fugitive had taken. People gave chase through some of the most frequented areas of Calcutta, as the runaway shot various men while he tried to escape, asking cab drivers, at gunpoint, to drive off with him. Three Indian chauffeurs were wounded, two critically. After dramatic pursuit, the Indian was caught as he tried to climb on to a 'tum tum' (a two wheeled horse drawn carriage) going north to south on Wellesley Street. A European, identified as A.W. Ogg, "noticed a revolver in his hand and immediately seized him with most commendable pluck".[477] The injured European was identified as Mr. Ernest Day, an employee of the I.G.S.N. Company, "a quiet law-abiding citizen", a "loveable man" who had been "shot down like a dog" while looking at the shop window of Hall and Anderson on Chowringhee Road.[478] He died later that day, after having been taken to the hospital. His attacker, the 'Indian', was identified as Gopinath Saha, "a thin, sallow complexioned young man of 21 or 22 years of age".[479] Dressed in a khaki shirt and white dhoti, with an "expensive wristlet watch" on his hand,[480] Saha looked like a member of the 'bhadralok'—the mostly upper caste Bengali middle and upper class—an impression reinforced by his

476. "The Chowringhee Murder," *The Bengalee,* January 15, 1924.
477. "Calcutta Sensation: A European Shot Dead," *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, January 13, 1924.
478. "Murder of Mr. E. Day" *The Bengalee*, January 15, 1924.
479. "The Chowringhee Murder," *The Bengalee,* January 15, 1924.
480. "'Calcutta Sensation' A European Shot Dead," *Amrita Bazar Patrika* January 13, 1924.

speaking English when arrested.[481] He had in his possession a Mauser automatic pistol and a revolver, as well as many unspent cartridges.

As it so happened, Ernest Day's death was the consequence of a case of mistaken identity. It emerged from statements made after his arrest that Saha had intended to assassinate Charles Tegart, the Commissioner of Police in Calcutta. Tegart was notorious for having established the Intelligence Branch of the Calcutta Police, which kept tabs on individuals and organisations suspected of revolutionary activities. During his long career in Calcutta, he had been involved in the suppression of revolutionary activity during the anti-partition protests and the Swadeshi movement in Bengal. Known for his daredevil methods of policing, he had also been accused of custodial torture and abuse of political prisoners. [482] In 1924, a bulletin from the Indian Psychoanalytical Society, published in the *Bulletin of the International Psychoanalytic Association* amidst news of the various international societies, mentions that their President, Girindrasekhar Bose, had been called as "a

---

481. Though Saha reportedly spoke English immediately after having been arrested, in prison he spoke to his doctors in Bengali. For a discussion of 'bhadralok' as a category see Julius L. Lipner, "Introduction" *Ānandamath, or The Sacred Brotherhood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 3-5.

482. Charles Tegart joined the Indian Police in 1901. During his time in Bengal, he participated in the discovery of arms at the Maniktola house of Aurobindo Ghosh, was involved in the investigation of the Alipur Bomb case, and investigated the murder of Naren Gossain, an informer in the Alipur bomb trial who was killed by his fellow inmates in jail. Till his retirement in 1931, Tegart's name was attached to all terrorist plots in Bengal that were anticipated or investigated. One of Tegart's fiercest critics was the Theosophist and Indian nationalist, Annie Besant. Irish like Tegart, she was on the opposite side of the political spectrum. Besant alleged:

> Over 100 political prisoners under the Defence of India Act [are] in a pitiable state and ill-treated by the Criminal Intelligence Department men. They are taken to Elysium Row, Calcutta, and subjected to brutal treatment. The Criminal Intelligence Department men write confessions and try to force captives to sign them. Some signatures are found to be forged. The internees are beaten. They are kept fasting, with only one pice [1/64th of a Rupee] worth of fried rice a day, and sometimes faint. They are kept handcuffed, hands and arms are fastened upstretched, and they are whipped. Mechanical tortures are used, and one internee's hand was broken. Sexual atrocities are perpetrated.

"Report on the Allegations of Torture by Police on the Political Prisoners" in *Terrorism in Bengal: A Chronological Account of Violent Incidents from 1907 to 1939* Volume 4, ed. Amiya K Samanta (Calcutta: Government of West Bengal, 1995), xxiii. From a very different political perspective Tegart's colleague S.G. Taylor wrote:

> On another occasion, when Tegart was D.I.G. in charge of the Bengal Intelligence Branch, a member of one of the revolutionary groups of Bengal was taken to the officer for questioning. The man proved to be adamant in refusing to give any information, and this fact was reported to Tegart and the latter ordered the man to be produced before him in his private office. They were left alone and the man still obstinately declined to open his mouth. Whereupon Tegart took a loaded revolver from a drawer in his desk and pulled the trigger. The bullet whizzed past the man's ear and buried itself in the wall behind him, Tegart said calmly: 'Now will you speak?' He did - volubly and at length.

S.G. Taylor, 'Sir Charles Tegart' MSS Eur F 161/247, IORPP. See also Michael Silvestri, "An Irishman is specially suited to be a Policeman: Sir Charles Tegart and Revolutionary Terrorism in Bengal," *History Ireland* 8, (Winter 2000): 40-44.

psychological expert witness" in a "sensational political murder case", but leaves out the particulars of the incident.[483] It is by turning to contemporary newspapers that one learns that Bose was an expert witness in the Saha case, part of a trial where the question of politics became indivisible from an account of the psyche. The Saha case confronts us with an assassination, a political act, that belies attempts to understand it solely within the framework of rationally motivated action. In this, it is a reminder of how psychic processes accompany and often give direction to political events, and yet how the two are irreducible to each other. This case requires us to hold the immanence of the psyche in political life together with its irreducibility.

Reconstructing the Gopinath Saha case is an opportunity to understand this intersection of nationalist activity and psychoanalytic affiliation in a colonial courtroom, and the ends to which psychoanalysis was mobilized. Saha's dramatic courtroom speech, invoking 'Mother India', leads us into a domain where it is difficult to draw a line between mysticism and patriotism, fantasy and political action. In her book *The Juridical Unconscious*, Shoshana Felman delineates the distinct goals of law and literature: "[a] trial is presumed to be a search for truth, but, technically, it is a search for a decision, and thus, in essence, it seeks not simply truth but a finality: a force of resolution. A literary text is, on the other hand, a search for meaning, for expression, for heightened significance, and for symbolic understanding."[484] As I hope to establish in the following discussion, the fantasy of Mother India confuses these distinctions. It was developed in literature, notably the 1882 novel *Anandamath*, influenced national and anti-colonial political action, and played a prominent role in the Saha trial. The courtroom becomes the site where symbolic understanding is offered and sought, and *Anandamath,* a literary text, provides political vocabulary, and a template for revolutionary action, thus functioning as the mainspring of 'a force of resolution'. Here law, literature, and politics were not mutually exclusive domains but profoundly, sometimes unexpectedly linked, directing and giving form to one another. This trial tells the story of a nation and identity in formation, and the sexual and religious politics of the time returns us to themes that have accompanied my account of psychoanalysis in the colony: how to co-exist with a neighbour and find an ethical relationship to

483. M.N. Banerji, "The Indian Psychoanalytical Society", Bulletin of the International Psychoanalytic Association 6, (1925): 241.
484. Shoshana Felman, *The Juridical Unconscious* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 55.

otherness. To give a very different account of how to approach these questions from those offered by the encounter between psychoanalysis and the courtroom, I offer a reading of Rabindranath Tagore's novel *Gora,* and Mahasweta Devi's story "Breast Giver".

'A Sensational Political Murder': Insanity in the Courtroom

Soon after the killing of Ernest Day, widely referred to as 'The Chowringhee Outrage', Gopinath Saha was produced before a District Magistrate at a Sessions Court. Once his identity was established, it was decided that the case would be tried at the High Court. The first step of Saha's defence counsel was to put before the Court an insanity plea. The prosecution's witnesses, two doctors, both said Saha appeared sane in his interactions with them after he had been taken into custody. He appeared lucid and was able to answer questions put to him. According to W.G. Hamilton, I.M.S., the Inspector General of Prisons: "the prisoner spoke like a sane person. He always spoke rationally, took his meals, occupied himself most of the day in reading and was clean in his habits."[485] Saha himself said to one of the doctors that he was not insane. He had tried to escape after shooting Ernest Day, the prosecution argued, which showed that he recognised the consequences of his actions. His attempt at escape indicated that he could differentiate between right and wrong, and that his actions on the day of the crime suggested that he knew what he had done was wrong. The prosecution then urged the jury to consider whether Saha would have acted in the way he did if policemen had been present on the scene.

In its cross examination of the doctors, the defence counsel raised three main points: an insane person could have lucid intervals; an insane person could think of themselves as sane; and there was a history of insanity in Saha's family. Defence witnesses included people from Saha's childhood: his friends and teachers, and a cousin. They all testified to the presence of 'madness' in the family. The catalogue of suffering was encapsulated in a question posed by the defence counsel to the prosecution's medical witness:

485. "Gopinath Saha", *The Indian Daily News*, February 13, 1924. The newspaper report mentions that in these interactions, the doctors spoke in English and communicated with Saha with the help of an interpreter.

> Suppose you heard that the prisoner's uncle was insane and disappeared, that an aunt was insane and committed suicide, that a cousin tried to commit suicide twice, that another cousin committed suicide, that his parents were mentally deranged that the prisoner is one of four brothers one of whom is absolutely insane from birth while the other two are not quite mentally responsible, would not those be factors in deciding the question of the prisoner's sanity or insanity?[486]

The prosecution's arguments had been marked by an either/or form of thinking. Saha knew he was committing a crime, thus he couldn't be insane, as though one cancelled out the other. This form of reasoning, unsurprising in a courtroom, does not have room for the possibility of unconscious motivations. By contrast, the Freudian account of guilt and criminality stresses such motivations and even suggests that a confession of a particular crime may well arise from guilt accruing to another act.[487] In its response to the prosecution's arguments, the defence had offered a deterministic account of heredity, admitting a family history that no doubt shaped Saha's experience of the world, but without any discussion of what this past meant to him, and what he'd made of it. In this context, Dr. Girindrasekhar Bose was summoned as an expert witness by the defence. He spoke to Saha in Bengali, who seemed lucid. *The Indian Daily News* reported on his meeting with Saha, and Bose's subsequent statement in court:

> Insane persons often showed physical abnormalities known as stigmata. He examined the accused physically. The accused's skin was not normal. His muscular system was also not normal. His chest was abnormal, one side being prominent and the other side sunk. There were glandular swellings in his neck. That was a sign of a morbid condition. Witness spoke to the accused in Bengali. Asthma was associated with insanity. The accused's intelligence and memory were normal, but he had a delusion, thinking that he received calls from the mother country. The accused said that he used to lose his appetite and sleep when these calls came and he got very excited. Having regard to the history of the accused and his family when both parents were

486. "Gopinath Saha", *The Indian Daily News*, February 13, 1924.
487. See Freud, "Psychoanalysis and the Establishment of Facts in Legal Proceedings," *SE* 9:97-114 and "On Some Character Types Met With in Psychoanalytic Work" *SE* 14:309-333.

> tainted the children must also be tainted. The conduct of the accused in the lower court was compatible with insanity. […] If the trial went on the accused would be able to follow most of the points, but he would get excited when the call of the disembodied spirits came. The accused's delusion was that the mother country calls to him to rescue her and when that call came he lost his appetite and sleep. If that call did not come during the course of the trial the accused would not get excited.[488]

Bose's account of Saha's 'delusion' was an alternative to the understanding of 'insanity' that the prosecution worked with, as the very idea of a 'delusion' makes room for motivations that the subject may not be aware of. Yet with the exception of this acknowledgement of 'delusion', this was no more a psychoanalytic diagnosis that what was offered by the prosecution. Bose's investment in a normative ideal—the words 'normal', 'abnormal' and derivations of these are used five times in the first ten sentences of Bose's testimony—is at odds with the psychoanalytic understanding of normality as an 'ideal fiction'.[489] By turning to some of his writing, we can better situate Bose's statement in court.

In Bose's writing there was a belief in the strict separation of disciplines–the first portion of his essay "Manuser Mon" argues for the autonomy of psychology from physiology, biology and philosophy. The interest in scientificity and disciplinarity was a major influence on how Bose theorised matters relating to the mind/ psyche.[490] Illustrative of this is the theory of 'pan psychic psycho physical parallelism', developed in Bose's first book, and discussed in most subsequent work. The theory posits a radical separation between the domains of the psychic/mental and the physical. However, since both the body and the mind seem affected in certain instances, such as when alcohol is consumed, all objects are understood to

---

488. "Gopinath Saha", *The Indian Daily News*, February 13, 1924.
489. Freud writes: "a normal ego, like normality in general is an ideal fiction." "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" *SE* 23:389.
490.Girindrasekhar Bose, "Manusher Mon", *Prabasi*, Asad, 1337. (Volume 30, Part 1,1930): 339-353. Ashis Nandy accords to Bose's Bengali writings a greater skill and authenticity than his English texts, saying that "[it] is even possible that in Bengali he could more openly reconcile Indian classical traditions and the science of psychoanalysis, not only as two cognitive orders but as two aspects of his own self." Nandy, "Savage Freud," 119. However what Nandy does not discuss is Bose's stated dissatisfaction with the Bengali language: "[w]hen one sits down to write an essay in Bangla, one experiences the lack of appropriate terminology at every step." Girindrasekhar Bose, *Svapna*, (Kolkata: Vivekananda Book Centre, 2013 [1928]), 3. Translation mine. Despite Bose's interest in a standardised, scientific terminology in Bengali, the word 'mon' in the title of his essay is very difficult to translate, as it could indicate mind, soul, psyche etc.

have both a physical and a psychical component to them, and these respective components influence their corresponding counterparts in the object that is being acted upon–in this case, the person consuming the alcohol.

Theoretically, this seems to make the body unavailable as an object of enquiry for psychoanalysis since, though both can be co-present in the symptom, the body has been so rigorously distinguished from the mind. This was certainly not the case in Bose's therapeutic practice, where the patient's body was read and commented upon. Indeed Bose's theory puts his relation with psychoanalysis in question, given the manner in which Freud theorised the instinct / drive (Trieb) as "a concept on the frontier between the mental and the somatic" and "as a measure of the demand made upon the mind for work in consequence of its connection with the body."[491] Freud's words—'frontier', 'demand'—indicate a conversation, a back and forth movement central to which is the issue of translation—as though the drive is a process of translation of a source text that cannot otherwise be accessed. What could the *talking* cure be, given Bose's utter splitting of the psychic from the material? Bose's theory of the separate spheres of the material and the psychic cannot account for speech, especially the psychoanalytic understanding of the body being taken as material for speech in the expression of a symptom.

In his role as expert witness, Bose established Saha's 'insanity' based on physiology, the presence of cryptic 'stigmata' and a link that he made between asthma and insanity. Yet his own theories, especially that of 'pan psychic psycho physical parallelism', could not accommodate the use of the body as material for the expression of a psychic symptom, even though Bose, in his clinical practice, was confronted with such symptoms. Similarly, the link between the physical symptoms (the stigmata and asthma), the 'delusion' and the diagnosis of 'insanity' remain unclear in Bose's court testimony. And while an account of the environment and family history are important to psychoanalytic interpretation, in that they are taken up and transformed in a subject's psychic history, in Bose's version we find a view of heredity that is both reductive and deterministic: 'when both parents were tainted the children must also be tainted'.[492] In such an account, the outcome of history can be known in advance, rather than being something fraught and unpredictable. It

491. Freud, "Instincts and their Vicissitudes," *SE* 14:122.
492. A rejection of such a theory of heredity 'taint' was crucial to the development of psychoanalysis, as it marked Freud's break with Charcot. See Freud, "Heredity and the Aetiology of the Neuroses" *SE* 3:141-156.

cannot admit that Saha's life was a response to his history, and by virtue of this contained the possibility of having been something else. While Bose's testimony was the first mention in court of Mother India, he did not comment on this figure who, as we shall see, played a key role in the case.

The prosecution's account suggested that Saha acted in full awareness and control of himself: a version of events that rids the act of psychic significance, insofar as admitting the psyche into an account of things is also to admit the unknowable. Yet Girindrasekhar Bose for the defence not only subscribed to a similar version of psychic determinism, he also omitted to make a link between an account of Saha's psyche and the specifically political form that his actions had taken. An essay from Bose's book *Everyday Psychoanalysis,* titled "Crime and Psychoanalysis", sheds light on his testimony. Discussing the usefulness of psychoanalysis in understanding 'crime' or 'criminality', Bose writes that "a crime is the inevitable result of foregoing individual social, hereditary, ethnological, and other factors. A criminal, according to my view, therefore, is not responsible for his actions [...] You cannot punish a criminal any more than you can punish a diseased individual".[493]

Bose emphasized these very hereditary factors in his diagnosis of Saha.[494] Such a position, however, denies entire groups of people the capacity for responsible action, on the basis of hereditary and ethnological factors. Bose's position coincides with the colonial administrative practice of classifying 'criminal tribes'.[495] The sociologist Meena Radhakrishna writes that the discipline of anthropology contributed towards establishing the categories of 'primitive' and 'civilised' in the colony, then used them to criminalize the 'primitive': "[i]n the popular ethnographic literature of the period, a sketch was drawn of a criminal who possessed not just bizarre social customs, but a strange body and psyche as well".[496] The implications of such reasoning are most eloquently articulated by Hannah Arendt, writing in the

493. Bose, *Everyday Psycho-Analysis*, 61.
494. Cf Melanie Klein, "On Criminality" in *Love Guilt and Reparation and Other Works 1921-1945* (London: Virago, 1988), 258-261. Klein writes: "I endeavoured to show that criminal tendencies are also at work in normal children…it is not (as it is usually supposed) the weakness or lack of a super-ego, it is not in other words the lack of conscience, but the overpowering strictness of the super-ego, which is responsible for the characteristic behaviour of asocial and criminal persons." 258.
495. The Criminal Tribes Acts of 1871and 1911 sought to "suppress 'hereditary criminal' sections of Indian society". Meena Radhakrishna, *Dishonoured by History: "Criminal Tribes" and British Colonial Policy* (New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2001), 2.
496. Radhakrishna, *Dishonoured by History,* 4.

context of anti-Semitism and Nazi totalitarianism: "[i]f crime is understood to be a kind of fatality, natural or economic, everybody will finally be suspected of some special predestination to it", and that supposed tolerance or leniency shown to people understood to be predisposed to crime could switch to a decision to do away with them altogether.[497] Not being considered fit to be subject to the law, in this argument, is a fate possibly more violent than the punishment inflicted by the law. Bose places both the criminal and the diseased person outside of the realm of responsible action. The Saha case requires an account of the subject that would jettison neither the subject's unconscious, nor their capacity to take responsibility for themselves. This was not to be found in the medical-legal parameters of a colonial courtroom.

After listening to the testimonies of various witnesses, the jury decided that the accused was fit to stand trial and the newspapers ran reports of this the next day under the headline 'Insanity Plea Rejected'. In an unpublished memoir of her husband, Kathleen Tegart would recount how the plea failed and say of Bose's arguments: "[p]erhaps he protested too much."[498] In the meantime, the question of madness and politics was being taken up in the wider political responses to the Saha case. Outside the courtroom, discussions in the press and legislative assemblies brought together issues of racism and political repression. These alert us to a political landscape in which we can never be certain whether 'insanity' is to identified in the actions of a man like Saha, or in the measures taken by the colonial administration.

'Unconscious Terrorists'

News of Ernest Day's killing filled the Empire Theatre in Calcutta, where the European Association held a mass meeting to voice their feelings about the matter. A colleague of Ernest Day's read an extract from a letter he had received from an

497. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966), 81. The quote continues:

> "Punishment is the right of the criminal," of which he is deprived if (in the words of Proust) "judges assume and are more inclined to pardon murder in inverts and treason in Jews for reasons derived from...racial predestination." It is an attraction to murder and treason which hides behind such perverted tolerance, for in a moment it can switch to a decision to liquidate not only all actual criminals but all who are "racially" predestined to commit certain crimes.

Bose's book was published in 1945, and it is eerie that it repeats, in its discussion of 'criminals', the kind of reasoning that had first placed the Jews outside the sphere of responsible action – their crimes could not be punished because they could not be judged by the same moral-legal code as everyone else, which then placed them outside of the realm of citizenship and humanity.

498. Kathleen Tegart, *Charles Tegart: Memoir of an Indian Policeman*. Unpublished manuscript, MSS EUR C.235/1, IORPP.

Indian friend which expressed "abhorrence at the dastardly outrage against humanity and against an innocent soul" which was committed when Mr. Day was murdered. [499] In the next couple of days, various statements were issued stressing that the murder was *not* a racial matter. This was stressed multiple times in the gathering mentioned above, though at one point the meeting noted the difficulty of accepting this opinion: "[t]he Chairman observed that it was most horribly hard to get out of one's mind that this was not a racial matter. One of their own community had been shot down in a most ruthless manner by an Indian. But the more one thought of what one knew of it already the more one was convinced as far as one could see at present, that it was not a racial matter at all."[500]

At its meeting, the European Association had passed three resolutions. The first two resolutions had expressed sympathy with Mr Day's relatives, and condemned the act, but the third petitioned the government to exercise caution in the release of political prisoners, which was an issue of public debate at the time.[501] The murder of Ernest Day took place at a time when the Bengal legislature was debating the release of prisoners interned under Bengal State Prisoners Regulation, III of 1818. This piece of legislation allowed the government to arrest and detain indefinitely, without trial, people suspected of criminal intent. The following telegram was sent by the Association to Ramsey Macdonald, the newly elected Labour Prime Minister, and Stanley Baldwin, the former Prime Minister, in England: "[t]he European Association, as a representative body of the European community in India trust you will exert your influence to strengthen the hands of those responsible for the maintainence of law and order in this country!"[502]

This political position angered the nationalist press. In the reasoning of the European Association, Indians had to chase the assailant, and themselves be injured in the process, to prove that the murder was not a 'racial matter'. The burden of proof lay with the Indians, whether in the form of regret expressed—as in the letter quoted in the meeting, or in the acts of the injured chauffeurs. Quick to pick up on

499. "Murder of Mr. E Day: Meeting of Europeans in Calcutta," *The Bengalee*, January 15, 1924.
500. "Murder of Mr. E Day: Meeting of Europeans in Calcutta," *The Bengalee*, January 15, 1924.
501. "That this meeting of Europeans of Calcutta strongly urges that Govt. of India and the Govt. of Bengal not yield to any agitation which might embarrass the Police and others responsible for the maintenance of order and the proper execution of their duty, and assures the Government concerned that they can rely upon the whole-hearted and unanimous support of the European community." "Chronicle of Events 1924," *The Indian Quarterly Register Being A Quarterly Digest of Indian Public Affairs* 1, (Jan-Mar 1924), 9.
502. "Chronicle of Events 1924", 9.

this attitude and condemn it, the nationalist press pointed out how Europeans routinely ill-treated Indians, something that the European Association would not acknowledge: "why is it that Europeans in this country never raise a single voice of protest when a European kicks or shoots an Indian to death? Is it the Indians who spread racial hatred or the Europeans?"[503] Another newspaper reminded its readers of the most notorious British shooting in recent memory, Jallianwallah Bagh: "when thousands of innocent men and children were brutally massacred."[504] The papers also pointed out how any attack on an European was a means of strengthening the repressive powers of the Government: "[i]f a single white man is murdered by an Indian, Europeans set up a tremendous cry for law and order and demand that the powers of the police must not be curtailed."[505]

The opinion expressed by the nationalist press, that race determined the difference in treatment of Europeans and Indians, seems to have been unwittingly, and perhaps unconsciously, accepted by the European Association itself. There is a curious double negation in the statement made at the Association's meeting, 'it was most horribly hard to get out of one's mind that this was not a racial matter followed by 'the more one thought of what one knew […] it was not a racial matter at all'. The first sentence would make more conventional sense if it said 'this was a racial matter', but the addition of the 'not' begs the question of why the thought 'this was not a racial matter' should be 'most horribly hard' to get out of the mind – or why indeed, it would need to be evicted from the mind at all. Would it have been more comforting to think that it was indeed a racial matter (as the nationalist press suggested the Europeans did in any case)?

Widespread arrests took place after the Day murder, including arrests of members of the Congress, a party committed to non-violent struggle. Responding to these, the *Forward*, a newspaper founded by the Swarajist leader C.R. Das, took aim at the very Intelligence Departments that Saha's intended target, Charles Tegart, had played such an important role in establishing:

503. *Hindusthan* 23 January, *Reports on Native Newspapers 1924*, NMML, New Delhi.
504. *Bangavasi* 19 January, *Reports on Native Newspapers 1924*, NMML. For a discussion of Jallianwallah Bagh and its impact on the psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion, see Chapter 2.
505. *Dainik Basumati* 22 January, *Reports on Native Newspapers 1924*, NMML.

> Intelligence Departments are the curse of modern civilisation. They have brought ruin on Germany and they are slowly but surely undermining the fabric of British rule in India, more than any political agitation or revolutionary outrage. The activities of all Intelligence Departments are as dark and dangerous as the ways of Satan. Where they exist, who their masters are, how they spend and waste public money, what their plans are, how they execute these plans, who their prospective victims are – nobody can tell. Even the light of Providence cannot probably penetrate the Cimmerian darkness in which the nocturnal agents of that department lay out their plans and cast their nets to entrap unwary citizens.[…] Repression is a double-edged weapon. It destroys the victim no doubt. But in the long run it completes the moral ruin and political bankruptcy of the agent who uses it.[506]

In the previous two chapters, we discussed how colonial officers and administrators in India, such as Claud Daly, Owen Berkeley Hill, John Hutton and James Mills identified themselves with a position of knowledge and mastery. In each case, encounters with psychoanalysis tugged at this construction of the self and threatened to undo it by casting light on both the sexual anxiety, as well as the murderous desires that formed the backcloth of this position of colonial self-knowing mastery. Their writing bears witness to the defences they put up against potentially transformative forms of insight, which would have created uncertainty and doubt untenable for men invested in occupying positions of colonial authority. Here, Das's description of Intelligence Departments identifies for critique this very alignment of knowledge/mastery, finding it to be no less than 'the curse of modern civilisation'.

The tellingly named 'Intelligence' Departments (what does such naming do to our understanding of 'intelligence', one might ask) are identified by Das as places where knowledge merges into its opposites—obfuscation and deception—making these places 'dark and dangerous' sites of entrapment. These departments were the most heightened institutional expression of the alignment of knowledge with mastery in political life, showing how this necessitated the use of repression—whether it was the arrests and detention of political activists, or as we discussed in the previous chapter, attacks on Naga villages.

506. *Forward* 22 January, *Reports on Native Newspapers 1924*, NMML.

Das's description of the inefficacy of the use of repression— 'moral ruin' and 'political bankruptcy' is the long term fate of its agents—is an instance of how acute political awareness created a form of insight into the psyche. Das's description of the failures of political repression is curiously like Freud's description of the inefficacy of repression as a psychic strategy—the symptom may succeed in quelling what has been found unacceptable, but in time it becomes too expensive to sustain. The speech given by the Governor, Lord Lytton, when opening the Legislative Assembly, discussed the issue of the powers of arrest and detention vested in the government. Lytton used the Day murder to argue that Regulation III was crucial to the containment of revolutionary violence. Anticipating the argument that revolutionary crimes could be tried under ordinary law, he expressed his lack of faith in judicial process, and, like many of his contemporaries drew upon the category of perversion to speak of anti-colonial political action:

> eager impulsive natures and hearts aflame with righteous patriotic fervour to be poisoned by the revolutionary virus, to risk the lives of our servants and even those of innocent men in the street, to send the assassins to the gallows and allow those who have perverted them, trained them, armed them, and sent them out upon their butcher's work to lurk in the background, unscathed, and to prepare lists of fresh victims—that is one policy, that is what is euphemistically described as relying on judicial proceedings.[507]

Here the Government itself shares with the terrorists a lack of faith in judicial proceedings. The Governor of Bengal, and the European Association of Calcutta, both used the Chowringhee incident to argue in favour of continuing repressive legislation. They were champions of the police. "Mr. Day died indeed that some brave men might live, men who watched and guarded over them at a constant peril of their lives" said the European Association, referring to Tegart and praising his

507. "Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council January-March 1924" in *The Indian Quarterly Register Being A Quarterly Digest of Indian Public Affairs* 1, (Jan-Mar 1924), 379. See Chapters 1 and 2 in this dissertation for discussions of the category of perversion, as a concept in Freud's writing on sexuality, and as a prism through which anti-colonial politics were read. See also the *Sedition Committee Report* (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1918). This report, widely known as the Rowlatt Report, repeatedly uses the category of 'perversion' to describe armed resistance to colonial rule, writing of "the perversion of youths that went on under the cloak of education" and describing a document which "discloses an elaborate scheme for the perversion of whole neighbourhoods through organisations of students and schoolboys." 115-116; 118.

courageous work.[508] Their opinion was shared by the highest government authority in the country, the Viceroy and Governor General of India, who said that the importance of legislation like Regulation III "recently received tragic confirmation in the murder of Mr. Day and the injuries to three Indians who attempted to stop the flight of his assailant."[509]

It was a troubled time in Indian politics. The murder of Ernest Day took place the year after Gandhi had called off the non-cooperation movement, after the infamous incident at Chauri Chaura in which farmers set fire to a police station, killing twenty two policemen. Their actions were in retaliation for police firing at their peaceful non-cooperation demonstration. Gandhi had felt that the outbreak of violence showed that the nation was not spiritually prepared for Independence, and had not been able to truly accept the ideal of nonviolence.[510] This sudden and somewhat authoritarian end to a movement that had consumed the lives and energies of a large section of the nation left many disillusioned and directionless, and created a vacuum in the political life of the country. Gandhi himself was sent to prison soon after. Following this, there was a split in the Congress party, in which a group headed by Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das differed from Gandhi in their understanding of what non-cooperation meant. While Gandhi was in favour of boycotting elections, Nehru and Das formed the Swarajist party, which decided to contest elections in order to non-cooperate from within, or, in C.R. Das's words, to enter councils to "wreck these monsters of Reforms which were drinking the life-blood of the nation and make Govt. by Council impossible".[511] Their point was to show up the injustice of supposed political reforms which allowed Indians the right to contest elections, but which also allowed the Governor General in Council to overrule any decisions taken by the legislature.

Das's Swarajist Party, which had a majority in the Bengal State legislature, used the murder of Ernest Day to argue in favour of the release of political prisoners. Das himself made an impassioned critique of the legislation when he addressed the house:

---

508. "Murder of Mr. E Day: Meeting of Europeans in Calcutta" *The Bengalee* January 15, 1924. It is telling how they try to represent this accidental death in the language of an intentional sacrifice.
509. "Viceroy's Opening Address" in *The Indian Quarterly Register Being A Quarterly Digest of Indian Public Affairs* 1, (Jan-Mar 1924),117.
510. See Shahid Amin, *Event Metaphor Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922-1992* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
511. "Chronicle of Events 1924", 6.

> I ask the Government to seriously consider, can the application of these lawless laws, as I call them – these repressive orders, executive decrees- can it possibly put an end to revolutionary movement? […] in the history of the world has revolutionary movement been checked at any time by repressive legislation? It has never been checked. It can never check revolutionary movement. It can never suppress it. I am told that when these internments took place the revolutionary movement was supressed. It was not suppressed. If it was suppressed why has it raised its head again? It was not supressed. It buried its head underground. Every time you apply these regulations, every time you send people to jail without trial, it creates disaffection. I will ask you to seriously consider—can revolutionary crimes cease if disaffection increases? The revolutionaries may be temporarily supressed but only for the time. Remember, the man who throws the bomb is not the only terrorist. He is a terrorist undoubtedly. The man who shoots fellow citizens is a terrorist. He is a terrorist no doubt. But he is not the only terrorist. There are unconscious terrorists. These terrorists are those who practice upon the fear of the people.[512]

Once again, Das's political commentary is akin to the language of psychoanalysis. If we return here to our discussion of the superego in the first chapter, we will remember that in Freud's account the forces and desires in the psyche—aggressive, rebellious—cannot be kept in check by the superego, that internal 'garrison' keeping watch over a conquered city. Through the course of this thesis I have argued that the history of psychoanalysis in India allows us unique insight into the bloodthirsty and ruthless nature of superegoic injunctions, especially when these have institutional and cultural sanction. It is when the law and its representatives, whether Claud Daly or Berkeley Hill in relation to 'natives', the colonial administrators in the Naga Hills, or the Government addressed by Das, are most certain of their perfection that they can act in the cruellest and most aggressive fashion—creating what Das describes, in a revealing turn of phrase, as 'lawless laws'. Judicial process functioned as a way of maintaining debate within law—the opportunity for interpretation of the law. By doing away with this possibility of

512. "Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council January-March 1924," *The Indian Quarterly Register Being A Quarterly Digest of Indian Public Affairs* 1, (Jan-Mar 1924), 385.

dissension, the writ of the law became identical with itself, allowing its representatives to usurp the symbolic place of the law itself, thus making it empty, worthless and vindictive. Such lawless laws, in Das's account, produce the very thing that they set out to control—disaffection, just as the superego as an agent of repression within the psyche never manages to quell what it sets about to control.

Das then describes 'those who practice upon the fear of the people' as 'unconscious terrorists'. This description of the government is rich in its ambiguity. The colonial government is constituted of 'unconscious terrorists' because they are unconscious of, or in flight from their affinity with the terrorists they punished, since both rejected judicial process as a means to justice. Their rejection, though, came from different positions and for the revolutionary terrorists it was a response to repression, not in service of it. Quoting from an unnamed English newspaper article from a few years back, Das said: "[e]very one who talks of the need of law and order while ignoring the still greater need for justice is a terrorist."[513] By manipulating 'the fear of the people' the colonial government earnt itself the appellation of 'unconscious terrorists' also because its policies targeted the psyche of the population of the people it governed: by producing constant fear and anxiety, the Government terrorised the unconscious of the people. And yet 'those who practice upon the fear of people' can also be read to mean that the practices of the 'unconscious terrorists' not only created fear in the people but were themselves organised around fearing the people, based on the colonial government's fear of the population is supressed. Das's dense and revealing choice of words also allows us to suggest that the agents of a lawless law are terrorists *in* the unconscious: that the superego is a terrorist in every psyche. These explanations do not contradict or cancel each other, rather, they show political and psychic insight condensed in a challenge to colonial oppression.

Yet amongst the nationalists and colonial government alike, some fears were shared. These related to the question of authority, and fear of the ambivalence in the relationship to authority, once again a theme that linked to discussions in the previous chapters. Sections of the nationalist press argued in favour of the release of political prisoners, precisely so that revolutionary terrorist action could be avoided. Some argued that people turned to political violence because nonviolent means of

513. "Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council," 385.

expressing 'patriotism' were met with such severe repression.[514]. Other newspapers said that if they wanted, Indians could be good at armed revolution, but had chosen the strategically superior path of nonviolence instead. Insisting upon the non violent character of the political movement in India, the nationalist press was, at this time, keen to distance itself from the murder. The Government, on the other hand, and the Anglo Indian press associated the murder of Ernest Day with resurgent terrorism. Yet for all concerned, the prospect of political violence that the murder called forth was accompanied by fears of anarchy: "we had been deceiving ourselves with the notion that the frankenstein [sic] of anarchism had been laid at rest, and the common sense of our young men had found out that it was impossible to attain swaraj in this country by a crazy and impossible vendetta".[515] The spectre of anarchism threatened to disturb political order: "It is the duty of every Government, whether bureaucratic or popular, to firmly repress such dangerous activities and maintain peace and order. Once they are allowed to be flouted and the people grow accustomed to disregard them, the whole country will become a field for the performance of anarchist orgies."[516]

The nationalist press, however, was quick to qualify that anarchism could not be tackled by the government without the support of the people, or by repressive legislation. Yet, in contradiction to such a position, we find that the nationalist press simultaneously called on the government (bureaucratic or popular) to act authoritatively, and to 'firmly repress such dangerous activities'. The aftermath of the Day murder was marked by a fear of loss of structures of authority which threatened, not just political order, but also sexual difference and sexual norms. A political murder threatened to turn the country into 'a field for the performance of anarchist orgies'. Fear of an unbound, uncontrolled sexuality accompanies the threat of political disorder. No surprise then, that a description of anarchism is

514. One newspaper, referring to the imprisonment of M.K. Gandhi, the 'Mahatma', wrote: "[h]ad the Government not committed the mistake of arresting the Mahatma, the residue of revolutionism that was still extant would have completely disappeared from the country". Nayak 15 January, *Report on Native Newspapers 1924*, NMML. Another newspaper said that Indians wanted Swaraj (self rule, independence) but had "an instinctive abhorrence for murder" *Bande Mataram* 16 January *Report on Native Newspapers 1924*, NMML white yet another paper expressed the opinion that "revolution is against the spirit of India". Nayak 16 January, *Report on Native Newspapers 1924,* NMML.
515 "The Cult of The Revolver Again," *The Bengalee*, January 16 1924. The report begins with the following sentence: "[t]he criminal mentality of Barendra Kumar Ghose and Gopi Nath Shah abundantly prove that non violent non cooperation is fast losing its hold upon the extreme young men of Bengal and that the cult of the bomb and revolver is again finding in this province a large number of youthful worshippers."
516. "The Cult of The Revolver Again," *The Bengalee*, January 16 1924.

accompanied by a reference to *Frankenstein*—it is unclear whether 'the frankenstein [sic] of anarchism' refers to the creature made by Victor Frankenstein in Mary Shelley's novel, or the creator himself. In either case, there is a crisis of authority and sexuality. In the novel an act of paternal creation disturbs sexual difference, as no mother is involved. The creature, denied a parent, or filiation, commits a series of killings. In the previous chapters, we noted how colonial authority often represented itself as parental authority. After the murder of Ernest Day, the press was demanding the restoration of a repressive authority, its invocation of 'Frankenstein' alerts us to the pervasiveness of the link between governmental and parental authority.

At the time of these discussions, little was known about Saha or his motivations, but his crime had already become intermeshed in larger political concerns. He had come to signify, variously, the threat of resurgent revolutionary terrorism; the prospect of repressive violence: "we may now expect more searches and more arrests, possibly more applications of Regulation III"[517]; a disregard for the 'true' nationalist/spiritual movement of India: "all forms of violence should by this time have been eliminated as the result of the movement of self-suffering and self purification"[518]; a warning to the repressive government etc.[519]

'Devotional Service to the Mother'

After the rejection of the insanity plea, Saha's trial continued and the crime was reconstructed in Court, with the counsel for the prosecution reminding the jury that the accused had already confessed to killing Ernest Day. Then the judge turned to Saha and asked him if he had anything to say. His statement created a sensation, and I quote it as it was reported in the press:

> "It is a very auspicious day for me. The Mother is calling me in order that I may rest for ever on her bosom and therefore I want to go. In the ordinary way I left home after hearing the call of the Mother in order to offer

517. *Forward* 15 January, *Reports on Native Newspapers 1924*, NMML.
518. *Servant* 15 January, *Reports on Native Newspapers 1924*, NMML.
519. The proximity between the positions of the press and the political parties is not surprising given the close links between the newspapers and political organisations. The revolutionaries often grouped together through publication such as the *Jugantar* and *Bande Mataram*. The practice of forming alliances by working for revolutionary papers would continue as can be seen in the activities of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association.

devotional service to her. I have been to many places in Bengal rendering devotional service to the Mother. In the beginning of last year I read in the newspapers that a European gentleman of the name of Mr Tegart, after going all over the world and collecting information regarding Freedom for India, was returning to India with a view to obstruct our endeavours. I began meditating very much on the question of this obstruction to our freedom. While thus contemplating over it I would feel my head got heated I could not sleep at night or eat my food and would walk about at night on the roof. In this state I heard the call of the Mother which was this – 'follow him'. From that time onwards I began collecting information regarding him. I found that in the last Swadeshi era in Bengal he was the Deputy Commissioner of Police in Calcutta. At that time he ill-treated and oppressed the servers of the country and others who were not servers of the country. At times his ill treatment and oppression were inhuman. He interned without trial many people, including some who had nothing to do with political affairs. Investigating further I found that in the Balasore fight, the fight between the people at Balasore and the police, he was connected with the "Honorable" Jitendra Nath Mukerji.[520] I also came to know he was a Sinn Feiner, that is to say, a resident of Ireland. He endeavoured to obstruct his own countrymen at Dublin in the matter of obtaining freedom but he failed.[521] Then I began

520. With this reference to the 'Balasore fight' Saha reminded his listeners that Tegart was responsible for the death of Jatindranath Mukherji 'Bagha Jatin', in a gun battle in Balasore, Orissa, 1915. Jatin was part of the surge in armed revolutionary activity during the First World War, and had liased with German officials to secure a shipment of arms to India. This planned revolutionary uprising would have been an international attempt, with support from expatriate revolutionaries in the United States of America. M.N. Roy, who later founded the Mexican Communist Party, was also involved, travelling to Germany as an emissary for Jatindranath Mukherji. When Saha was arrested, a Mauser pistol was found in his possession. During the First World War, Kathleen Tegart writes in her biography of her husband, terrorists in India acquired a large number of Mauser pistols. While this explains how Saha may have got hold of one, it also strengthens his association with Bagha Jatin, who used a Mauser pistol in his fight with Tegart. See Kama Maclean *A Revolutionary History of Interwar India* (London: Hurst, 2015); Amit Kumar Gupta "Defying Death: Nationalist Revolutionism in India 1897-1938," *Social Scientist* 25, (No. 9/10 Sep. - Oct., 1997): 3-27; Rashed Uz Zaman "Bengal Terrorism and the Ambiguity of the Bengal Muslims" in *An International History of Terrorism: Western and Non Western Experiences* ed. J. Hanhimāki, J. Blumenau (London: Routledge, 2013), 150-166.

521. Saha's description of Tegart as both a 'Sinn Feiner' *and* someone who obstructed the freedom of the Irish seems bizarre, and the reader is led to think that he mistook 'Sinn Feiner' to mean 'a resident of Ireland'. This may well have been the case, but something of this contradictory portrayal of Tegart was in common with how the highest authorities of the British administration in Bengal spoke of him. Lord Lytton, for example, in his speech to the Caledonian Society dinner in December 1924 said: "Mr. Tegart is an Irishman, for all we know he may be a Sinn Feiner at heart. He is the last man, therefore, to the deficient in sympathy with the cause of Indian nationalism, and that the nationalists

meditating very deeply over all these matters. While meditating I got the call from the Mother which was this : 'Remove him from this world.' I first saw him at Lalbazar on the day of the distribution of the King's Police Medal I saw him many times at the flower stalls of the New Market and I passed close by him many a time. Besides I followed him when he left his house, with fire arms in my possession to the Eden Gardens and many other places. I even opened the safety check of my revolver to be ready to shoot him while following him but did not actually shoot him because I had not received the final call from my Mother. I began meditating deeply as to whether I would kill him or not. Two or three days before my arrest I got back into my previous state. I felt my head heated. I had no sleep, no appetite for food, could not stop inside my room, felt as if there was fire around me in my room which compelled me to go on the roof and walk about. The day on which I was arrested I came out in the morning. I went to the maidan and walked absent mindedly for a long distance. I saw a Saheb and thought that was Mr. Tegart. Then I shot him. I fired many shots at him. I do not remember how many I fired. My idea was lest by any chance he should survive. Before I fired and even when I fired I did not have in my mind the idea whether I myself was going to live or not. When many people shouted out 'robber, robber, murder, murder, catch him, catch him' then I began to run. I was in such a state I thought the road was swinging before me. I fled a good long distance through roads, gullies and buildings. I was surrounded by people who were running after me. I do not remember the details of my chase. I

---

should mistake him for an enemy and seek his life on that count, is only the proof of how the strong wine of politics can inflame the passion and cloud the judgement of weak mind [sic]" in Amiya Samanta "Introduction" to *Terrorism in Bengal* Vol III, xxiii (Calcutta: Government of West Bengal, 1995). Yet by the time this speech was made, almost a year after Saha's attempt on Tegart's life, the policeman, along with other officers had already been on deputation to the intelligence service in Ireland as "officers with experience in dealing with the terrorist organisations in Bengal were taken on deputation to take on the Irish terrorists in the 1920s." Amiya Samanta 'Introduction' *Terrorism in Bengal* Vol III, v. Tegart's colleague David Petrie's account of the policeman reflects this dualism in the portrayal of Tegart as someone both sympathetic to and intolerant of revolutionary movements:

> [w]as Tegart ever an enemy of the Indian freedom? To those knowing his characteristically Irish make-up, the bare idea is ludicrous. He loved freedom for himself as he did for others with all his ardent Irish nature […] He could find plenty to say against his own Government and could say it with point of vigour. Indeed few were better constituted than he to understand what the mind of the bomb and pistalwallah was blindly groping after. On the other hand, he set his face sternly against any short-cut blazed by murder and gang-robbery, on the plea that they were 'political'.

In Amiya Samanta *Terrorism in Bengal* Vol III, xxiii.

could not run anymore. My throat became dry. I saw a tum-tum in front of me. I told the man 'drive quickly, I have done work for the country, I have done good, I have done no wrong.' When I was on the step of the tum tum talking to the man a large number of people pounced upon me. After that they gave me the usual thing, namely, they assaulted me very much and after that I do not know what followed.[522] I became unconscious. When I got back my senses I found I was inside the thana." After setting out what transpired at the thana and in the Medical College Hospital, and, how after he was taken to Lalbazaar and questioned by various police officers, the prisoner continued: "Then I was taken to the room of the Commissioner of Police. Even then my idea was that the Commissioner of Police was dead. When I saw him standing in front of me I was dumb-founded I thought what have I done. He asked me 'You have made a mistake , have you not?' I said 'How could such a thing have happened.' I even now think that as regards the bullets which I have fired into the Saheb who was killed, a sort of current had formed by reason of which these bullet wounds have affected Mr Tegart's body. I believe in thought current. Then, he asked me for my name and address. I said nothing at all. Then I was taken to the Special Branch Office at Elysium Row. There a Rathajatra festival went on. Many Sahebs and Bengali officers were there. I said to Bhupen Chatterji, 'Don't you worry me now. I am not in a good state of health now. Whatever I wish to say I will say tomorrow at 12 or 12-30. It is no use worrying me.' About 8 o'clock that night Mr Tegart himself came. He again asked me 'You have made a mistake, have you not?' I then thought what is the use in not speaking out any longer. I said, 'Yes, it was you I wanted to kill, but you have been saved by God's grace'. The next day about 12 or 1 o clock I was taken to the Intelligence Branch. There I made a statement of Bhupen Chatterji. Before I made my statement I said to him 'Look here I have got one condition to impose before I make my statement, namely, that after I finish what I have got to say nobody shall

522. At the time of his appearance at the Sessions Court, Saha had asked: "Is it not a fact that when I was secured I was knocked down and struck with lathis and fists?", to which Ogg, the witness being examined, replied in the negative. Towards the conclusion of the day's proceedings, Saha also remarked that "he had read and heard about the British being a very brave people but on the day of the arrest, when he was floored, one of his captors caught hold of both his hands from the back and another pressed his neck to the ground with his boot and assaulted him on his face and other parts of his body with kicks and blows […]" "The Chowringhee Murder" *The Bengalee*, January 16, 1924.

worry me asking questions or worrying themselves.' I gave my name Gopimohan Saha, Serampore, formerly of Oxford Street, now Khetra Mohan Street. He asked my father's name and I said 'Bejoykrishna Saha, deceased.' The next day I was again taken to the Commissioner, Mr. Tegart. From there I was taken to Bankshall Street Police Court and from there to the Presidency Jail where I am now living. I have now stated what I have got to say in regard to my history. With regard to the innocent Sahib whom I have killed I am extremely sorry. I do not consider anybody to be my enemy because he is a Saheb. I am extremely sorry for those persons who have been wounded. At the time of the execution of work whoever comes to resist is more than an enemy, whether he belongs to my country or not. For the soul of this Saheb I am praying to God. So far this is what I have got to state now. At the conclusion of the trial shortly before my sentence I want to say a few words which I intend to address to my countrymen. I pray that I may be allowed to do so. It will not take much time, it will be over in five minutes. From the jail I want to write a letter to my mother. For that you will please give me leave. Please give judgement taking into view the fact that I will not be able to live in jail, I want to go to the Mother. That is all."[523]

This is the first time during the trial that Saha spoke at length, and the first time the court and the public received his own account of his actions. As Bose pointed out in his testimony, the figure of Mother India was very important to Saha, and it is to her, in his speech, that he attributes both the impetus of his actions, as well as a form of restless, relentless suffering. For Saha, this disembodied voice created the need for meticulous research into the colonial system, especially the part played in it by Charles Tegart. The command to kill Tegart produced in Saha an intense ambivalence, and it is not clear if he carried out this action because he heard a final command to do so from the Mother, or whether he did so because he could not bear the uncertainty of not having heard this final command. Even though he used the gun as his political weapon, paradoxically in his speech, Saha ends up locating the greatest political agency in the psyche: 'I believe in thought current'.

The newspapers covering the trial highlighted Saha's apology to the dead man and the calls of the mother country, but did not dwell too much on the

523. "Gopinath in Dock" *The Indian Daily News* February 15, 1924.

implications of what he had said. The next day, Saha was found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging. The verdict was delivered by a Jury with a majority of Indians, and the sentencing was carried out by Justice Pearson, who had presided over the case. The *Viswamitra* wrote that while the jury had found Saha guilty, the sentencing had been the prerogative of the judge, who had chosen the harshest sentence of death by hanging as opposed to the alternative of transportation for life.[524]

On March 2nd 1924 Saha was executed inside the prison grounds. The authorities refused to return the body to his family, but allowed one of his cousins to enter the prison grounds to perform a Hindu cremation, a ceremony left incomplete because the family was not permitted to take Saha's bones or ashes outside the prison. Saha's speech had brought him into political prominence and on the day of the execution, a group of patriots gathered outside the prison to claim the body and perform funeral rites. They were led by Subhas Chandra Bose, Secretary of the Bengal State Congress and editor of the *Forward,* the newspaper offering some of the most trenchant critiques of British repressive measures. Yet Gopinath Saha does not figure prominently in accounts of the political struggles in India. In reading about him, the reader would be forgiven for thinking that there is not much to say. A young patriotic Indian shot the wrong man, significant enough to note, but not quite as interesting as revolutionary violence during the Swadeshi movement, the activities of secret revolutionary groups, or the later well-articulated political activities of revolutionaries of the Hindustan Republican Socialist Army, such as Bhagat Singh and Chandrasekhar Azad.[525] This may in part be attributed to the greater effects of the other revolutionary incidents. However, one cannot escape the feeling that there was something about Saha's act that escaped, or exceeded both the political commentators of his time, and the historians who have revisited the period. Saha's trial confronts revolution with suffering and insanity. Here, the suffering cannot be assimilated entirely into ideals of self-sacrifice or devotion to the nation, and neither

524. Commenting on this decision the newspaper said: "he passed the sentence to preserve British prestige. Those in whose hands powers have been placed are so much influenced by racial sentiments and prestige that they look upon the whole world with contempt." *Viswamitra* 18 February, *Report on Native Newspapers 1924* , NMML. A couple of days later, the paper commented on the Saha case again, saying "(i)f there is any room for mercy in law" it should be shown to Saha, as "love and mercy are the best means for establishing sovereignty over the hearts of the people." *Viswamitra* 20 February, *Report on Native Newspapers 1924,* NMML.
525. See Maclean, *A Revolutionary History of Interwar India.*

is the insanity reducible to colonial stereotypes of anti-imperial politics as perverse or mad.

A desire to be with the Mother marks the beginning ('The Mother is calling me in order that I may rest for ever on her bosom and therefore I want to go') and end ('Please give judgement taking into view the fact that I will not be able to live in jail, I want to go to the Mother. That is all.') of Gopinath Saha's courtroom speech. This figure, Mother India, brings together psychoanalysis and nationalism, through the courtroom testimonies of Girindrasekhar Bose and Gopinath Saha. Taking us into the heart of how fantasies of community, femininity and sexual identity circulated amongst notable sections of Indian revolutionary terrorists and in the wider popular imagination, Saha's invocation of Mother India calls forth the multiple, contradictory ways in which this powerful figurehead of Indian nationalism was invoked in the politics of the time. Here, I examine the antecedents, and many valences of Mother India, who never symbolized one idea, but rather drew her immense ability to inspire from being a composite of various images: divine and prosaic, ancient and contemporary. The art historian Sumathi Ramaswamy has drawn attention to a curious contradiction that seems to give Mother India her power and longevity as a symbol. She writes: "an important suggestion that was made by several key intellectuals at the start of the nationalist century that there is no distinction between the country named India by colonial geography and Bharat Mata who resides in all its constituent parts."[526] The visual melding of Mother India represented as a devi, or goddess, which placed her in a divine temporality, with the modern map of India, the product of British colonization, were not seen to be contradictory, instead producing a strong affective response.

Mother India was sometimes all powerful, sometimes in need of help and the figure, by including so many versions of femininity in itself, allowed devotees to pick the form that inspired them, while still uniting them under the same symbol. The flexibility of Mother India, her ability to encompass various forms of femininity as well as features of geography, owes something to her affinity to the goddesses of Hindu cosmology. Mother India, like the goddesses, could have a benevolent or avenging form. Kali was particularly important, because of her associations with battle and annihilation. She was also seen as the embodiment of 'Shakti', translated

526. Sumathi Ramaswamy, *The Goddess and the Nation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 42-43.

as strength, which is more than simply physical prowess, an idea with great resonance for the believer.[527] In drawing upon Kali, those fashioning Mother India could both endow the new female deity with ancient powers, and recast Kali as a modern avenger. In her article on the mother who possesses, in the book *Devi: Goddesses in India,* the anthropologist Kathleen Erndl puts it thus: "although individual Hindu goddesses possess distinctive attributes, their identities also overlap to a considerable extent, and many – if not most – goddesses are, at least in some contexts, considered to be manifestations of the one Great Goddess, Devī. Similarly, goddesses tend to manifest themselves not in a single form but in multiple iconic forms, as well as in such natural phenomena such as rocks, plants, rivers, mountains, and flames".[528]

Girindrasekhar Bose identified Saha's relationship to 'Mother India' as a delusion, taking this as proof of the young man's insanity. Saha's courtroom speech certainly invites comparison with Freud's famous case study "Psycho-analytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of Case of Paranoia" [1911], better known as the Schreber case. Freud comments on the delusions of Senatspräsident Schreber, which involved a special relationship with God (divided into a lower and upper god) who oppressed him but also saw him as the bearer of a special task.[529] Both Schreber and Saha shared this special relationship to a deity, who gave them a sense of purpose but also left them feeling persecuted. Yet any likeness between Saha and Schreber is complicated by the sheer number of men in Saha's time who shared his belief in Mother India, and around it based their commitment to the country's cause. If this was madness, then it was madness shared, and sustained over decades. Or, as

---

527. Kathleen Erdnl writes:

> implicit in the theology of this Goddess is a monism in which matter and spirit are not differentiated but rather form a continuity that subsumed within *śakti*, the feminine creative principle. Whereas the Śaiva and Vaisnava theologies both recognize *śakti* to be the active (feminine) aspect of the Divine, the complement to the inactive (masculine) aspect, the goddess-focused Śākta theology understands śakti, which is identified with the Great Goddess, to be the ultimate reality itself and the totality of all being. The general thrust of Śākta theology is to affirm the reality, power, and life force that pervades the material world. Matter itself, while always changing, is sacred and is not different from spirit. The Goddess is the totality of all existence; accordingly, as a reflection of the way things really are, she takes on both gentle (*saumya*) forms such as Vaisno Devī and fierce (*raudra*) forms such as Kālī.

"Śerānvālī: The Mother Who Possesses" *Devi: Goddesses in India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 173.

528. Erndl, "Śerānvālī: The Mother Who Possesses," 173.

529. Freud, 'Psychoanalytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)', *SE* 12:1-82.

Jacqueline Rose puts it in *The Question of Zion*: "there is no normal yardstick by which we can measure the neurosis of the group. All-absorbing, a group is its own environment, creates its own world."[530] Bose's reliance on the category of the 'normal' in his diagnosis of Saha seems even more unhelpful given that Mother India was one of the key figures of inspiration for the nationalist movement, particularly the armed revolutionary nationalist movement in Bengal.[531] In 1908, Sri Aurobindo, anti colonial revolutionary and mystic wrote: "The Mother asks us for no schemes, no plans, no methods. She herself will provide the schemes, the plans, the methods, better than any we can devise. She asks for our hearts, our lives, nothing less, nothing more."[532] It was as though in Saha, Aurobindo's words had become prophetic.

The divine ordaining of terrestrial terrorism, through communication between the supernatural and the earthly, was a feature of the revolutionary rhetoric of the time. The divine played a part not only in the quotidian aspects of terrorist life, but also served as a justification for which activities were carried out and when. In his memoirs, the revolutionary nationalist Hemchandra Kanungo, describing the famous Maniktola secret society which was led by Aurobindo's brother Barindra Ghosh, wrote that religious practice was part of the daily routine of the group and experiences of spiritual realization were a means of moving up its hierarchy.[533] When the Maniktola Society decided to assassinate the Mayor of Chandernagore, a French administered territory that often provided a safe refuge away from British authorities, it seemed like a bizarre move, inviting persecution from otherwise tolerant French authorities. Kanungo writes that the reason given for this attempt (which failed) was a 'message' that Aurobindo had received.

This 'divine' message prefigures Saha's account of the attempted assassination of Charles Tegart. We do not know from whom Aurobindo received

530. Jacqueline Rose, *The Question of Zion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 17.
531. In 1905, when the partition of Bengal was announced, Abanindranath Tagore, one of the founders of the style of painting known as the Bengal School of Art, and a nephew of the writer Rabindranath Tagore, painted his famous 'Bharat Mata'. When it was first painted, it was titled 'Banga Mata' (Bengal-mother), and it was only later that it came to symbolize the entire nation.
532. Aurobindo, "The Demand of the Mother" in *On Nationalism* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1965), 119.
533. Hem Chandra Kanungo, *Account of the Revolutionary Movement in Bengal* with annotations by the Intelligence Branch, Bengal (Kolkata: Setu Prakashani, 2015) For a concise history of the Maniktala Society, see Rashed Uz Zaman "Bengal Terrorism and the Ambiguity of the Bengal Muslims".

his 'message', and Peter Heehs, historian and former archivist at the Aurobindo ashram, has argued that the consistent use of a mystical-spiritual vocabulary helped mask Aurobindo's involvement with the revolutionary movement, which served him well at the time when he was called into court during the Alipur Bomb trial. This mystical vagueness may have been strategic, but in his writings, Aurobindo makes clear the centrality of the figure of the mother, passionately exhorting his readers to surrender themselves in entirety to her as a patriotic destiny: "the perfect sense of self-abandonment which Chaitanya felt for Hari must be felt by Bengal for the Mother. Then only will Bengal be herself and able to fulfill the destiny to which after so many centuries of preparation she has been called."[534]

In describing how his actions were guided by the commands of the Mother, Gopinath Saha evoked the love for the Mother celebrated by figures like Aurobindo. Saha's statements, that he 'left home after hearing the call of the Mother in order to offer devotional service to her' and that he had 'been to many places in Bengal rendering devotional service to the Mother' have a double valence. They could have meant that he travelled to various pilgrimage sites as a devotee, but they could just as well have meant that he travelled through Bengal pursuing a revolutionary education. His relationship to the Mother presents us with a situation where the language of mysticism and a medico-legal account of madness confront each other. Yet tied to this confrontation is a narrative of pain. Though Saha used a mystical-religious vocabulary ('auspicious', 'meditating', 'devotional service') to communicate his experience of contact with the mother, he also conveyed to his listeners a feeling of trapped restlessness, describing how he couldn't sleep, eat, or stay indoors, and experiencing sensations of being engulfed by fire.

Commenting on the case of the Papin sisters, who murdered their employers and whose lawyers subsequently made an insanity plea in court, Elisabeth Roudinesco writes that in Jacques Lacan's account of the sisters' state of mind, the crime " seemed to reflect the social reality of class hatred, but in fact it reflected another reality: that of paranoid alienation."[535] Roudinesco seems to suggest here that the psychic state is the truth behind an act that takes is contours from social

534. Aurobindo, "The Demand of the Mother," 116-117.
535. Elisabeth Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan: An Outline of a Life and History of a System of Thought* (New York: Polity Press, 1999), 64.

reality. I do not think the two can be so easily distinguished, or that one is more important than the other, though it is crucial to note, against the grain of nationalist remembering and forgetting, that Saha had a highly individual relationship to the collective social and political discourse of the mother, and this was a relationship of suffering and torment.

Devotion, patriotism, madness—these are difficult to distinguish not only in the Saha case, but in the kind of nationalism that Bharat Mata inspired, and was herself a product of. This Mother, whose origins are not obfuscated in ancient history, was a modern cultural and political creation. However, she came to have, so to say, a life of her own , with her demands and mysterious ways. This makes those writing about her seem less like creators and more like mediums, akin to those experiencing goddess possession, a phenomenon in which the devi is understood to inhabit a human medium, who then becomes the mouthpiece for demands, prophecies and accusations that are thought to emanate from the Goddess herself. In her study of these possessions, Erndl writes that "[t]his type of possession is not regarded as an affliction but rather as a sign of grace, as the Goddess's chosen method of granting a sacred vision (*darśan*) to her devotees."[536] Whether through devotion or madness, the Mother was exceptionally prominent in both Saha's account of his psychic states and in the nationalist movement's revolutionary activities and cultural production.

It is against the backdrop of the prominence of Mother India that I would like to discuss the mercy petition filed by Saha's own mother, after her son had been sentenced to death. In it, she said that her son was insane, had been misled by revolutionaries, and asked for his death sentence to be commuted. This is the first and only time we hear the voice of Saha's mother in the case characterised by the role the Mother had to play in it:

> "like many of the best of the land, Gopinath was drawn into the vortex of the movement. He left home despite of all our remonstrances. His simple nature drew him into all sorts of work and he did I am told the most splendid work

536. Erndl, "Śerānvālī: The Mother Who Possesses," 176-178.

in connection with the Khulna relief.[537] During the few occasions he came home his mental disturbance seemed more pronounced. The occasion I saw him was for a few minutes in the middle of December when the poor boy's irresponsibility seemed so apparent that I begged him to stay at home. But he shook me off saying he was following the 'Mother's call' and went away. I have already said of the horror one feels for such an act and the added horror of that [sic] a Hindu mother must feel to think that it was through the son she had borne the ideal of the Hindu race, the ideal of Ahimsa has been trampled to the dust trampled on the great ideal of the Hindu religion – Ahimsa. I venture to say that my poor boy Gopinath was not responsible for the act, but was used as an instrument by designing people who took advantage of his simplicity, his want of balance to sow in his mind the wicked ideas which unfortunately have fructified. Your humble memorialist has been further told that Dr. G.S. Bose, President of the Psycho-Analytical Society who made himself acquainted with the family and personal history of the accused and examined him personally, is fully convinced that my poor boy Gopinath is medically insane. […] Your humble memorialist prays that the sentence on the boy may be deferred and a Committee be appointed of medical experts of acknowledged authority like Major Birkley [sic] Owen of the Ranchi Asylum or Dr. G.S. Bose President of the Psycho-Analytical Society and some others like them. The finding of such a Committee of experts would I am sure support my cry for mercy on behalf of my poor boy who I firmly believe was irresponsible and unbalanced."[538]

The petition was rejected. Saha's trial and execution set the stage for his worldly afterlife. On the day of his sentencing, before the jury were to retire, Saha called out to say that as long as "repressions such as Jalianwalabag, Chandpur etc. would go on this state of things would continue. A time would come when the Government would feel the consequences."[539] When the jury returned with its verdict and the judge pronounced his sentence, Saha received the news with equanimity, calling out: "[m]ay every drop of my blood sow the seeds of freedom in

537. There was a famine in Khulna, Bengal in 1921. It was while contemplating this famine that M.K. Gandhi first considered adopting the khadi loincloth as his sole attire. "My Loin Cloth" *The Hindu,* October 2, 1921.
538. "Gopinath Shaha: Mother's Memorial to Governor for Mercy" *The Bengalee* February 28, 1924.
539. "Day Murder Case: Accused Sentenced to Death," *The Bengalee,* February 17, 1924.

every home in India".[540] The newspapers wrote about how Saha had put on weight after his death sentence, and "was so jolly and cheerful for these few days as though nothing extraordinary had happened to him."[541] It was reported that in Saha's last letter, addressed to his mother, he appealed to her "to pray to the Almighty that every mother in India should give birth to a son like him and that every home should be sanctified by a mother like his."[542] It was as though neither Saha, nor the nationalists beginning to celebrate him, had heard his own mother's words, and her attempt to articulate a political position different from her son's. The Mother's call drowned out Saha's mother's belief in 'ahimsa', non-violence. She became a symbolic figure, her disagreement with his actions was ignored when he wrote that every home should have—his word is 'sanctified'—a mother like his. In Saha's last words, his mother becomes an object of admiration and reverence, but at the cost of her words and subjectivity being erased. To understand further this gap between the Mother and mother, let us turn to *Anandamath*, a novel that helps us understand the politics of Mother India.

'Our Birthland is Our Mother' / 'Say *Bande Mataram* or we will kill you'

The origins of the figure of Mother India in relation to political nationalism are literary. The figure of the Mother-nation was developed in the novel *Anandamath* [1882] by Bankimcandra Chatterji, and first serialized in *Bangadarshan*, the leading Bengali journal of the time. This merger of mother with nation was, writes the postcolonial scholar Meenakshi Mukherjee: "the first time the Hindu concept of the mother goddess with its connotation of Shakti was linked with the idea of the country as a political unit, and the symbolic power of this fusion was far-reaching."[543] The novel tells the story of a group of armed Hindu ascetics, who call themselves 'santans' or 'children' of the Mother. Set during the famine of 1770, it follows the Santans as they liberate North Bengal from its Muslim rulers, who were titular heads under the control of the British East India Company. Yet even in the

540. "Gopi Nath Saha: Awarded Death Sentence," *The Indian Daily News,* February 18, 1924.
541. "The Funeral in Jail: Mr Subhas Bose and Several Students Refused Admittance," *The Bengalee,* March 2, 1924.
542. "The Funeral in Jail: Mr Subhas Bose and Several Students Refused Admittance," *The Bengalee,* March 2, 1924.
543. Meenakshi Mukherjee, "Anandamath: A Political Myth" *Economic and Political Weekly* 17, no. 22 (May 1982): 903.

novel, this merger of the mother with the nation is presented as a surprising idea, outside the remit of immediate comprehension or rational understanding. A would-be initiate hears a Santan hum a song: "Mahendra was a little astonished when he heard this song, and was at a loss to understand. Who was this mother 'rich in waters, rich in fruit, cooled by the southern airs, verdant with the harvest fair?'", and asks his companion for an explanation.[544] On hearing more of the song, he exclaims: "[b]ut that's our land, not a mother!", which is the cue for his companion to say "We recognize no other mother. 'One's mother and birthland are greater than heaven itself.' But we say that our birthland is our mother. We've no mother, fathers, brothers, friends, no wives, children, houses or homes. All we have is she who is rich in waters, rich in fruit, cooled by the southern air, verdant with the harvest fair."[545] By connecting the mother and birthland, indeed collapsing them into each other, the speaker is forging an emotionally charged relationship with a landscape and its features. The libidinal tie to the mother is drawn upon, except that the limit placed on access to the mother's body by the incest taboo is lifted, as the mother in question is a landscape. As geography, the mother also becomes eternally available, not subject to the fort-da movements of the mother who in Freud's account is both present, and absent to the child.

It is impossible to discuss political, and especially revolutionary activity in Bengal without reference to *Anandamath.* The novel functioned as inspiration, as template for organization, as well as being deeply contentious and divisive. Indeed, Hem Chandra Kanungo wrote in his memoirs that he was "trying to narrate the story of the so-called revolutionaries of Bengal trying unawares to enact '*Anandamath'* on the political stage."[546] Aurobindo was deeply influenced by it, and translated *Anandamath* into English, publishing the first thirteen chapters between 1909-1910 in a weekly he edited.[547] Kanungo writes of Aurobindo's ideas that "[t]his method of achieving the freedom of the country for salvation of the ancient civilisation and religion of India through supernatural power or religion, was borrowed wholly from *Anandamath.*"[548] In the novel*,* devotion to the nation-mother is expressed through

544. Bankimcandra Chatterji, *Anandamath*, 144.
545. Chatterji, *Anandamath*, 145.
546. Hem Chandra Kanungo, *Account of the Revolutionary Movement in Bengal*, 111.
547. See Lipner, "Introduction," 44. Later, the project for finishing the translation was taken up by his brother Barendra Ghosh.
548. Kanungo *Account of the Revolutionary Movement in Bengal*, 139.

the song 'Bande Mataram'— 'hail the Mother', sung at various points as the story of the Santans unfolds. Aurobindo gave the title *Bande Mataram* to a journal he published and the words became a popular and stirring slogan during the protests against Curzon's Territorial Redistribution Scheme, widely referred to as the first partition of Bengal.

"For what is a nation? What is our mother-country? It is not a piece of earth, nor a figure of speech, nor a fiction of the mind. It is mighty Shakti, composed of the Shaktis of all the millions of units that make up the nation".[549] Thus wrote Aurobindo in "Bhawani Mandir", a text in which he detailed plans for setting up ashrams in the hills to train spiritual-patriotic men who would serve the Mother. Bhawani is a name for Kali, and in this text Aurobindo attributes the oppressed position of India to the draining of Shakti in her residents: "We in India Fail in All Things for Want of Shakti".[550] The selection of the forest, in "Bhawani Mandir", as the site where revolutionaries will prepare themselves for Hindu patriotic activity immediately calls forth the setting of *Anandamath.* In the novel, the Santans operate out of a dense forest. As Lipner puts it "[i]t is from their abbey in the womb of the forest that the vision of the new India is born".[551] He argues that the forest in Bankim is a "uterine symbol of a new national life". [552] And indeed, in the novel, the temple to the mother is at the centre of many womb-like enfolding structures.

Masculinity was key to this project, insofar as devotees of the Mother, political revolutionaries, were meant to emerge from this forest-womb as virile warriors. Mrinalini Sinha describes the ambivalent response of the educated Bengali to colonial characterization as 'unmanly' and 'effeminate'. Partial acceptance of this accusation—for accusation it was seen to be—of 'effeminacy' was a means of critiquing British rule, which allowed its subjects to fall into such a state: "the emasculation of Indians was also the basis for challenging specific colonial policies."[553] Yet simultaneously, there was an attempt to recover this threatened masculinity through revolutionary action, of which Anandamath provided the

549. Aurobindo, "Bhawani Mandir" in *Bande Mataram: Early Political Writings* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1973), 65.
550. Aurobindo, "Bhawani Mandir," 62.
551. Lipner, "Introduction," 51.
552. Lipner, "Introduction," 55.
553. Lipner, "Introduction," 7.

prototype. A powerful fantasy of the Mother as incubator for revolutionary men was mobilised, one could argue, at least in part to repair the harm caused by colonial stereotyping. A return to the mother seemed to offer an opportunity to be recreated as a stronger, more masculine man. Physical improvement in *akharas* (gymnasia) was as much part of the activities of revolutionary societies as was the worship of the Mother.

The resurgent masculinity of revolutionary terrorism was accompanied by its own sexual politics. In *Anandamath*, the Santan order enjoined celibacy to the initiates. The penance for expressing desire for, or meeting a woman, was death. One of the Santans, Bhabananda, rescues a woman he finds dying by a riverbank (she is the wife of another Santan, and has consumed poison so that her husband is free to serve the Mother). He comes to desire her and says as much. She rejects him, reminding him of his duty. Later, in a battle against the English and Muslim soldiers, Bhabananda decides to do his penance by sacrificing himself to the enemy in an act of doomed, glorious, battlefield bravado. Bankim concludes the section soon after this hero is killed, with the words: "[a]las, for the charm of a beautiful woman! *You* are to blame in this world of travail."[554] The ideal Hindu revolutionary uprising that Bankim imagines has little room for women, and the episode of Bhabananda's death in the novel suggests that within this framework, as the converse of the idealisation of the mother, women are tainted by some sort of primary fault which makes them responsible for whatever goes wrong in the world.

This condition of celibacy for the mother's devotees engaged in militant-spiritual activity, both in *Anandamath* and in the project for Aurobindo's Bhawani Mandirs, had antecedents in "a long-standing Sanskritic theme to harp on celibacy as an invariable condition for the accumulation of *tapas* or spiritual power, which could then be directed for the effecting of various ends."[555] Mother India, Ramamswamy has pointed out, is never shown with a consort, and the paternity of her children remains unknown. Some illustrations depict her with infants at the breast, but this is not very common. The Mother existed outside of the Hindu family. This is reinforced by Aurobindo's rules for the Bhawani Mandirs that were to be built. Men working there were to give up their families and conjugal relations for the period of

554. Chatterji, *Anandamath*, 211.
555. Lipner, "Introduction," 56.

their service to the Mother. The virginal maternity of the mother demanded celibate devotion from her sons. *Anandamath*, and Aurobindo's plans for the Bhawani Mandir alert us to how the worship of the Mother was accompanied by fear and denigration of women, especially as sexual beings. Though the figure of Mother India remained open to interpretation and appropriation by groups with varying beliefs, this initial imagining of her not only excluded women, but was also linked to fear and aggression towards the Muslim residents of the region.

Bankim's mythology of the mother-nation has a central relation to forms of nationalism that have come to dominate Indian politics, as it was part of an attempt to fashion a glorious Hindu past. His story of the Santal uprising is set at the time of the Bengal famine of 1770, which witnessed a rebellion in which ascetics of both Hindu and Muslim denominations participated. Bankim, however, writes the Muslims out in his version of the rebellion. His novel draws its energy from the excision of the impure foreign body, whether this be women from the celibate Santan order, or Muslims from Bengal. Decribing the aftermath of the final major victory of the Santals in the novel, Bankim writes:

> that night the whole region was filled with cries to hari. The Children roamed around in bands, shouting *Bande Mataram!* Or "Hari, Lord of the world!" Some seized the weapons of the enemy soldiers or stripped their clothes, others kicked the faces of the dead or committed some other outrage. Some rushed towards the villages, other towards the towns, catching passers-by or householders and saying, "Say *Bande Mataram* or we will kill you!"[556]

And yet Bankim's tone is certainly not one of condemnation, and the reader is left wondering if there is more incitement than disapproval in the manner which Bankim describes the aftermath, as though to show that after the discipline and prohibitions of a holy war, the pleasures of unchecked violence await. The Bharat Mata that Bankim helped shape remains a deeply divisive symbol. India's inhabitants were not all Hindus, and people of other denominations were both frightened and alienated by the Hindu rhetoric of many of the political actors.

Anandamath directed its anger more towards the Muslim rulers of the past

556. Chatterji, *Anandamath*, 214.

than it did towards the British. Santan Jnanananda gave voice to these feelings when he addressed his army before an attack on the city where the leader of the Santans was held hostage: "[f]or a long time we've been wanting to smash the nest of these weaver-birds, to raze the city of these Muslim foreigners, and throw it into the river – to burn the enclosure of these swine and purify Mother Earth again!"[557] Here, we find that the mother-landscape acquires a sanctity that is threatened by the presence of the foreigner. Jnanananda's speech activates a discourse of male custody and sexual purity in which the men of a community are responsible of the 'honour' (read chastity) of the women who belong to the same group as them.

Harsh Husbands: Aggression and Passivity

To better understand how discussions of sexuality and identity were circulating in psychoanalytic writing at the time of the Saha trial, let us return to Girindrasekhar Bose, whose thoughts on masculinity and femininity were shaped by Bankimchandra Chatterji's writing, indicating once more a key link between psychoanalysis, the literary imagination and the self-fashioning of nationalism. Not only an example of literature shaping the form of psychoanalytic thinking, Bankim's writing creates an echo between Bose and Saha, who can both be seen to be participating within the same set of cultural influences, rather than separated by the divides of physician and patient, sane and insane.

In his essay "Conjugal Quarrels", Bose identifies these quarrels as ancient phenomena exacerbated in modern times: "Eve has eaten too much of the fruit of knowledge and her individuality is not to be suppressed so easily. The present-day Adam cannot have his own way. I mean no offence but the modern girl considers herself to be a member to [sic] the depressed class and claims not only equal status with her husband but also special privileges".[558] In saying this Bose claims he occupies the position of the neutral, scientific observer. A large part of the essay by Bose presents conjugal quarrels as arising from a conflict in women, between their desire to be dominated and their demands for a fuller place in the social. According to Bose, one of the chief reasons for conjugal quarrels is that modern man is not equal to satisfying women's masochism. Neither women's masochism nor the

557. Chatterji, *Anandamath*, 169.
558. Bose, *Everyday Psycho-Analysis*, 90.

expectation that this masochism requires men are questioned. Bose even goes on to make prescriptive statements: "[i]t is quite true that the female has to be wooed gently in the beginning but undue mildness on the part of the husband is often interpreted as lack of ardour and interferes with the happiness of the couple".[559]

Bose invokes Bankimcandra to support his analysis. According to Bose, Bankim said that women liked "sour tamarinds, hot chillies and a harsh husband."[560] Even though in Bose's understanding, "aggressiveness is essentially a male trait and submissiveness pre-eminently a female trait", in marriage the two sexes are supposed to resolve the demands of this 'curious admixture' by 'identifying' with the partner of the opposite sex, and *through* the other's aggression or submission, satisfying their own desire for the same.[561] Man must continue to be aggressive so that woman can satisfy her aggressiveness (which has no social outlet) by identifying with him, and woman must continue to be submissive so that through her submission man can live the passivity that will not be admitted of masculinity in the social. It is as though Bose's discussion of conjugality leads him straight into a crisis in heterosexuality that cannot be resolved.

Bankim excluded women from any participation in what was depicted as the ideal theological-revolutionary setting. Santan society gets one of its most devoted and daring members in Shanti, the wife of the Santan Jibananda. Women are not permitted into the order, so Shanti takes on the guise of a male ascetic to join the Santans. For crucial missions she transforms herself back into a woman, which allows her to be a successful spy in the enemy's camp. Bankim, like Bose, thought that aggression belonged to males and submissiveness behoved females. A note to the fifth edition of *Anandamath* by the author states: "Shanti has been made comparatively more restrained".[562] His novel, on the other hand, relies on the ability of his female heroine to perform both masculinity and femininity seamlessly, and this includes mastering masculine prowess as it is displayed in horse riding, combat and Sanskritic scriptural learning. As it so happened, Bankim felt the need to 'restrain' the character Shanti, and he never could allow her to enter the social order in the novel.

559. Bose, *Everyday Psycho-Analysis*, 105.
560. Bose, *Everyday Psycho-Analysis*, 104.
561. Bose, *Everyday Psycho-Analysis*, 102.
562. Chatterji, *Anandamath*, 129.

At the conclusion of the novel, after her husband Jibananda has performed his penance by dying on the battlefield (and subsequently been revived by a tantric healer), Shanti decides that even though their service to the Mother has been rendered and they are free to begin conjugal life, they shall remain celibate, saying: "[t]he two of us are renouncers, forever following the path of celibacy".[563] As Shanti and Jibananda had been married as children, their marriage was unconsummated. At this point, the narrator's voice breaks through, much as it did after Bhabananda's death: "[a]las, Mother, will they ever return? Will you ever again bear in your womb a son like Jibananda and a daughter like Shanti?"[564].

In this context, Bose's advocacy of the 'harsh husband', placed alongside his discussion of the heterosexual union can be read as symptomatic of the violence that was required to hold in place masculine identifications under colonial rule.[565] The historian Tanika Sarkar argues that one of the reasons for the immense resistance to British legislative intervention into the 'personal' lives of Hindus in colonial India was that this would threaten the colonised Indian man in the only sphere – the domestic – where the greatest authority was his, colonised Indian men having had to take a position of subservience and passivity towards their British rulers in what had come to be carved out as a 'public' sphere.

Yet as we shall see, Girindrasekhar Bose's writing and political positions are hard to pin down. The very categories of masculinity and femininity between which he tried to force a differentiation in theory, in fact basing his entire theory on the need for such a distinction, are tolerated in a much more muddled form in a case vignette in his book, *A New Theory of Mental Life* (1933). This case provides an exceptional account of the way in which questions of group affiliation and sexuality, staged in *Anandamath,* were taken up in the psychic life of a young man in early twentieth century Calcutta. Bose discusses a patient who develops a fear of being stabbed in the back after communal riots between Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta. Bose mentions that the man was 'Mahomedan' and that he felt this fear even in the safety of his house, long since the riots were over. Analysis brings forth memories of "school boy fights in his childhood when he used to play the tyrant with younger

563. Chatterji, *Anandamath*, 228.
564. Chatterji, *Anandamath*, 228.
565. Tanika Sarkar, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation: Community, Religion and Cultural Nationalism* (London: Hurst and Company, 2001).

boys. Homo-sexual scenes of the active type began to appear in his association, and it was then seen that in the unconscious mind the patient had equated ordinary fight with sexual assault."[566]

Bose writes that when the memories were those of 'active' homosexuality, the dreams revealed fantasies of passivity. When these 'passive homo-sexual traits' were mentioned to the patient, he expressed 'abhorrence' and denial. Later, the patient was to recall his willingness to play the 'passive' role in sexual encounters during his school days. According to Bose, the patient's dreams at this time began to show "an active attitude with a distinct pleasurable colouring".[567] This once again made contemplation of the 'passive' role unpleasant and it was only when the patient could bring up at will and enjoy in imagination what are described by Bose as the passive and active attitudes, that his fear of being stabbed disappeared. In this case, Bose hypothesises, both the active and passive wishes sought fulfilment simultaneously, and as their 'action attitudes' were contradictory, they were removed from consciousness. During the process of analysis, the wishes dominated consciousness by turns, and the cure coincided with the patient being able to hold both in mind, quite unlike Bose's theorisation of sexual difference where the two had to be kept separate.

If passivity is what has to be, historically and psychically, repudiated amongst men, then one might argue that this imposition of a passive position would also be a part of establishing domination is situations where men are in an antagonistic relation to other men—colonial occupation being one of these.[568] However, this internal psychic resistance to what was seen as passivity could perhaps also express itself as neurosis even when the threat was not a structuring condition like colonialism, but violence between commonly colonised groups, such as Hindus and Muslim in India. Like the Saha case, this account of Bose's patient highlights the impossibility of tracing a straightforwardly causal connection between

566. Bose, *A New Theory of Mental Life*, 47.
567. Bose, *A New Theory of Mental Life*, 47.
568. Important here is Diana Fuss' discussion of how homosexuality figures in Fanon's work. Fuss holds together the historical situation of black men's circulation in exploitative sexual labour, Fanon's homophobia *and* the theoretical link that psychoanalysis draws between homosexuality and the primitive. This can serve to alert us to the difficulty with which a colonial subject may come to identify as 'homosexual'. "Interior Colonies: Frantz Fanon and the Politics of Identification" in *Identification Papers*, 141-172.

the social—in this case, the riots—and psychic difficulty, but shows the interdependence between the two because the riots become intertwined, in the patient's psychic life, with the childhood initiations into masculinity. Bose does not theorise this imbrication, indeed his theory may not even be able to admit it.

As we have seen, Bose was himself invested in the idea of a normative order in which men repudiate passivity. His prescriptions in an essay like "Conjugal Quarrels" shored up the idea that men need to be assertive and dominating, particularly in relationships. While at the same time allowing for a radical ambiguity in how activity and passivity were distributed between the sexes, his therapeutic practice seems to have been directed at creating in the patient an acceptance of the passive position, and an ability to bear his own pleasures and desires. How, then, are we to understand this, given that Bose's writings also helped support a social structure that added to the psychic difficulties of his patient, and was, at least in part, the cause of distress? I think that Bose's work does not allow for this contradiction to be resolved. For an opportunity to take up these questions beyond the impasse posed by the political situation and the psychoanalytical writing, in the following section I turn to work by Rabindranath Tagore and Mahasweta Devi.

Other Mothers: *Gora* and 'Breast Giver'

If Rabindranath Tagore has an important place here, it is because his novel *Gora* is an immensely powerful exploration of group identity and sexual politics, and the bearing that these had on an emerging Indian nationalism.[569] The novel follows the hero, Gourmohan, 'Gora' to his friends because of his remarkably fair complexion, his friend Bipin, and the two heroines Lolita and Sucharita, through crises of faith, love and patriotism. It foregrounds the schisms in Hindu society, particularly those created by caste and the oppressive control of women. Tagore set the novel in the 1880s, but it is informed by his experiences of the anti partition movement. The text does not mention the year during which its events unfold, but the reader is told that Gora was born in the year of the Indian mutiny against the British in 1857, and Tanika Sarkar, in her commentary on the novel, has suggested

569. Rabindranath Tagore, *Gora* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1924). Translation attributed to W.W. Pearson.

that the events therein most likely take place in the 1880s.[570] The hero is a Hindu revivalist patriot, and Sarkar has noted that "it seems undeniable that Rabindranath of the Swadeshi era provided the model for the patriotic language of the early Gora in the novel. The novel is, therefore, autobiographical in a split mode. The early and the later Gora reflect the two different political moments in Rabindranath's life."[571]

Early on in the novel, the reader witnesses a conversation between Gora's mother Anandamoyi and her orthodox Hindu husband, in which it emerges that Gora was the child of Irish parents, entrusted to Anandamoyi by his birth mother during the sepoy mutiny of 1857, when there were widespread killings of the British in India. The child is raised by Anandmoyi in an orthodox Brahmin household, but the act of taking in and raising an outcaste and foreign child leads her to question Hindu social norms, and caste in particular. In another conversation with her husband, who has become increasingly orthodox in his old age, she says: "I have long since ceased to take pride in my caste", following that with "if, after having brought up Gora as a my child, I now start playing at orthodoxy, then, apart from its offending society, it would offend my own conscience." [572] Gora's antecedants have been kept a secret, both from the boy and from other members of the family and community. The irony of the matter is that Gora identifies as an orthodox Brahmin and refuses to eat with his mother because she employs a servant of a lower caste, even going to the extent of forbidding his friend Binoy from accepting food offered by Anandamoyi. Gora's allegiance is to the motherland, and, like we saw in the Saha case, this alienates him from his own mother. Gora identifies the motherland with tradition: "if I once begin to show disrespect for tradition, then one day perhaps I shall cease to respect my mother also."[573] His rejection of his mother then, paradoxically, is his attempt to preserve what he thinks is the basis of the respect he has for her—Hindu orthodox tradition.

The strength of Tagore's novel is that he does not parody Gora's position, even though the plot is structured to lead Gora to encounters that make him question

570. Tanika Sarkar, "Rabindranath's Gora and the Intractable Problem of Indian Patriotism" in *Rabindranath Tagore: Gora A Critical Companion* ed. Nandini Bhattacharya (Delhi: Primus Books, 2015).
571. Sarkar, "Rabindranath's Gora," 54.
572. Tagore *Gora*, 27.
573. Tagore *Gora*, 14.

his beliefs. Rather, the novel shows how the colonial situation closed off room for self-critique, and encouraged complete identification with ways of life that were felt to be disparaged and threatened by the presence of the coloniser. Engaged in correspondence, in the papers, with an English missionary who "attacked Hindu religion and Hindu society", Gora "would not acknowledge a single one, not even the smallest fraction, of the faults imputed to the Hindus by the opposite party."[574] That Gora feels his country and religion to be under siege is evident when he says "[w]hen the whole world has forsaken India and heaps insults upon her, I for my part wish to share her seat of dishonour – this caste-ridden, this superstitious, this idolatrous India of mine!"[575] *Gora* can be read as an attempt to understand the compelling pull of Hindu patriotism, while at the same time suggesting that the identifications that go into the making of such patriotism need to be questioned. It is remarkable how much of the novel is structured as dialogue, where questions of patriotism, religion and love are all debated. In *Anandamath*, by contrast, all rules and actions are explained on the basis of a divine order. In Tagore's novel, the patriot is given the gift of being heard, especially by those who disagree with him. The characters portrayed with sympathy in the novel are the ones who listen to each other, and allow themselves to be open to the transformative effects of listening and being heard. Crucial here is the place that Tagore gives to women's voices, particularly the two young heroines of the novel, Sucharita and Lolita. Raised in a Brahmo family, they are not confined to the Hindu zenana, and engage the men in dialogue, questioning them about caste and sexual oppression in orthodox Hinduism.

Like *Anandamath,* Tagore's novel is set in the past, but to very different ends. Set during the decade in which *Anandamath* was written, Tagore's *Gora* imagines a different relationship with what is thought of as 'foreign'. His novel is set at the time when *Anandamath* would have been enjoying widespread success in Bengal. By implanting a foreigner, Gora, in midst of an insular Hindu identity, Tagore seems to suggest that recognising what is foreign in us is a route out of entrapment in an exclusive, violent identification with nation or religion. In the course of the novel, Gora's travels in rural India confront him with the brutality of caste violence, as well as the relief afforded to the poor by the casteless solidarity of

574. Tagore *Gora*, 23.
575. Tagore *Gora*, 266.

Islam. Gora's instinct is to express solidarity where he sees oppression, but his emphasis on caste purity, fear of pollution and rituals of purification all inhibit what he can do for the sake of justice. Learning that he is an outcaste is therefore a form of freedom for Gora:

> I need no longer fear being contaminated or becoming an outcaste – I shall not now have to look on the ground at every step to preserve my purity […] I have all this time been struggling against everything around me in my efforts to preserve my faith whole and entire in that impregnable fortress! To-day in a single moment that fortress of my own creation has vanished like a dream, and I, having got absolute freedom, suddenly find myself in the midst of a vast truth![576]

Tagore's novel is radical in the place that it gives to women's voices, and its treatment of caste issues. There are limits to his radicalism though – while the novel is undoubtedly a critique of caste, the only place it has for a lower caste actor is that of a servant, whose liberation consists of finally being asked to serve her upper caste master a glass of water. Likewise, though Tagore creates heroines endowed with a complex interiority, and allows them to challenge the norms of their society, they are still presented to the reader as idealised forms of femininity.

It is this theme of the feminine body and its relationship to the nation that will be explored with great nuance by the feminist writer Mahasweta Devi. Her work is exemplary in its focus on how the armed nationalism and developmentalism of postcolonial India interacts with the experience of the subaltern woman. Here, I focus on her story "Breast Giver", which, I suggest, unravels the fantasy of the Mother-nation as developed by nationalist revolutionaries, of forbearing and sacrificial womanhood as represented in Bankim, and of gentle and enlightened Bhadralok femininity in Tagore. "Breast Giver" has as its protagonist Jashoda, an impoverished Brahmin woman, a "*professional mother"* who has given birth to twenty children. [577] She "doesn't remember at all when there was no child in her womb, when she didn't feel faint in the morning, when Kangali's body didn't *drill*

576. Tagore, *Gora*, 405.
577. Mahasweta Devi, "Breast Giver" in *Breast Stories*, trans. Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak (Calcutta: Seagull, 1998), 40.

her body like a geologist in a darkness lit only by an oil-lamp."[578]

Devi is playing with the dominant image of the bountiful, nurturing mother, but this mother is corporeal, sexual and her maternal capacity is depicted as mechanised (though not without pain) rather than idealised. Yet Jashoda, who shares a name with the mother of the Hindu deity Krishna, is not a mother simply by virtue of her twenty children. The title of the story, "Breast Giver", gives a clue to Jashoda's profession. She is also an immensely capable wet-nurse, suckling the many children of a large, wealthy household. As her employer says, "[t]he good lord sent you down as the legendary cow of fulfilment. Pull the teat and milk flows!".[579]

A small cult of the Mother forms around Jashoda, and she comes to be sought after and revered. Yet with age, and changes in child rearing practices, Jashoda is left abandoned and income-less, working in exchange for food in the house where she raised an entire generation on her milk. Here Jashoda discovers that she is ill, she has a stone in her breast. Diagnosed with cancer, but refusing to go to a hospital for religious reasons, ignored by her family and employers, Jashoda lies on the floor of her room as her breasts stream pus. Taken to hospital when no longer conscious, she enters a sort of a dream state, seeing her 'milk sons' in all those around her, she eventually dies alone.

Devi uses an ironic, interjecting narratorial voice that establishes its view of the world through allusions to historical events, literary texts and well-known figures, and a nuanced portrayal of the habitus of small town Hindu Bengal:

> Such is the power of the Indian soil that all women turn into mothers here and all men remain immersed in the spirit of holy childhood. Each man the Holy Child and each woman the Divine Mother.[…] Because he understood this the heroines of Saratchandra always fed the hero an extra mouthful of rice. The apparent simplicity of Saratchandra's and other similar writers' writings is actually very complex and to be thought of in the evening, peacefully after a glass of wood-apple juice.

The first sentence here combines colonial stereotypes of the native as

578. Devi, "Breast Giver," 39.
579. Devi, "Breast Giver," 49-50.

infantile, with the nationalist fantasy of nation as divine mother to describe Jashoda's participation in the cult of motherhood. In her account of mothering, Devi substitutes parody for piety. This is a departure, not just from nationalist accounts of Mother India, but also from the tone of progressive writers like Rabindranath Tagore. In fact the next sentence, referring to the Bengali writer Saratchandra, indicts the Bengali/ Indian intelligentsia for the way in which both nationalist and colonial fantasy was taken up by native writers in their construction of ideals of masculinity and femininity. In the final line the voice has switched, without the use of diacritical marks, to the voice of a generalised (male) Bhadralok speaker, recognisable through his wood-apple juice, his evening intellectual activity. This parodic representation of the male bhadralok reader/ intellectual has a parallel elsewhere in the story with the man who would visit another household to read a liberal newspaper, because he was afraid that the newspaper would disturb his own household's status quo by stirring up the women: "'[t]hey would wear shoes while they cooked'".[580] Devi is pointing out the hollowness of an enlightened intellectualism that excludes women. Yet she doesn't leave it at that. The story also depicts how the 'liberation' experienced by bourgeois women often comes at the expense of a labouring underclass woman. The women of her employer's household, freed by Jashoda from the task of breast-feeding, can retain bodily autonomy, enjoy sexual pleasure, and previously unimagined freedom of movement.

In her meticulous commentary on the text, Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak has pointed out that Mahasweta Devi, in her own reading of the story, sees it as :

> a parable of India after decolonisation. Like the protagonist Jashoda, India is mother by hire […] the people who are sworn to protect the new state, abuse and exploit her. If nothing is done to sustatin her, nothing given back to her, and if scientific help comes too late, she will die of a consuming cancer […] the ideological construct 'India' is too deeply informed by the goddess-infested reverse sexism of the Hindu majority.[581]

As Spivak points out, this reading, though the author's own, obscures the

580. Devi, "Breast Giver," 55.
581. Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak, '"breast giver" for author, reader, teacher, subaltern, historian' in *Breast Stories* (Calcutta: Seagull Books, 1998), 78.

complexity of Jashoda as a character, a subaltern. I would like to suggest that rather than solely functioning as a parable, the story works to expose the limitations of the identifications available to Jashoda, the poverty of the discourses of religion and patriotism in interpreting her world. Jashoda, like those around her, sees her work as something divinely sanctioned: "the Lionseated had appeared to Jasodha as a midwife […]. Otherwise who has ever seen or heard such a thing as constant pregnancies, giving birth, giving milk like a cow, without a thought, to others' children?".[582] These frequent allusions to the holy, nurturing cow strengthen the allusion to Mother India. Lactation is elevated to a supreme value within the universe of the story, as Jashoda's feats make giving birth seem inadequate. Yet even suckling over fifty children fails to secure Jashoda's place as a mother. Dying of cancer, alone in the hospital ward, she exclaims: "'If you suckle you're a mother, all lies!'".[583]

Motherhood collapses in on itself, failing to secure a place for woman in the social. The story ends with a strange shift in tone, in an almost theological pronouncement, Devi writes: "Jashoda was God manifest, others do and did whatever she thought. Jashoda's death was also the death of God. When a mortal masquerades as God here below, she is forsaken by all and she must always die alone."[584] Devi's 'others do and did whatever she thought' calls forth Aurobindo's statement about how the mother herself will provide the schemes and plans. Yet Devi suggests that when the sexed body, located in its dense network of caste and class obligations, is inserted into the picture, such a statement becomes a death warrant.

582. Devi, "Breast Giver," 53.
583. Devi, "Breast Giver," 67.
584. Devi, "Breast Giver," 75.

Conclusion

'Something rotten in the state of'

How slow my big-bosomed Mother India moves, even with her Army generals pushing and goading her.
Yezdi Gundevia to W.G. Archer, in the papers of W.G. Archer

Watching a production of Hamlet not long after writing about Gopinath Saha for the final chapter of this dissertation, I was astonished and somewhat unsettled by the similarities I found between what we know of the Saha case and Shakespeare's literary creation. Much like the Saha case, Hamlet troubles the idea of what we would call madness, and blurs the lines between performance, politics, and insanity: "I essentially am not in madness but mad in craft".[585] I was struck by how both Hamlet, the prince of Denmark, and Saha, a young man in early twentieth century Calcutta, were troubled by a vision, a visitation which seems to be more than a delusion, something that others acknowledged as real, but were not similarly tormented by. In the play, interrogations of internal psychic states are coeval with the question of the state of the polity, so when Marcellus says: "there is something rotten in the state of Denmark" it suggests not just that there is trouble in the polis, but also that something disturbs Hamlet the Prince, since the play often uses names of the royal kingdoms as synecdoches for members of the royal families.[586] This proximity between the state of the polis and the individual may, at least in part, be attributed to the fact that as heir to the throne, and future figurehead and representative of the state, Hamlet is particularly intimate with, and vulnerable to disturbances of order within the state.

And yet, Hamlet is not only disturbed by the 'something rotten' in the state, he goes further. Coming across a Captain accompanying the army of Fortinbras, the Norwegian prince, Hamlet enquires where this army is headed. In response, the Captain lets him know that the army goes to Poland "to gain a little patch of ground/That hath in it no profit but the name."[587] A soliloquy by Hamlet that follows

585. William Shakespeare, *Hamle*t, (London: Boomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2006), 382.
586. Shakespeare, *Hamle*t, 240.
587. Shakespeare, *Hamle*t, 398.

this encounter has him regretting his hesitation in taking revenge. Here he seems to seek, in the way in which a war-time state acts, a template and inspiration for his own actions:

"Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour's at the stake."[588]

The double negation in *'not* to stir *without* great argument' suggests that greatness lies not only in stirring in the absence of any great provocation, but in inventing cause for quarrel. To be great, in this account of things, is not only to be belligerent, spoiling for a fight, so to say, but also to be a fabricator, a liar. This 'greatness' though, that prompts Hamlet's speech, is specifically political and military and alerts us to how the State can be in thrall to its own self-idealisation: 'honour's at stake'. The tragedy of Hamlet plays out against the history of feuds between the royal house of Denmark, and the forces of Norway, and the audience is told that Hamlet was born the day his father defeated Norway. It is the violence, in fact the gratuitous violence of the state that Hamlet wants to channel into himself. As he says about the army expedition to Poland: "Exposing what is mortal and unsure/ To all that fortune, death and danger dare/ Even for an eggshell".[589] If Hamlet is troubled by his conscience then his conscience leads him into imitating the violence of the state.[590]

In this dissertation, we have encountered a connection between the state and psyche not just in relation to the Saha case, but also in Freud's discussion of the superego which, I have suggested, calls forth characteristics of the colonial state, notably its proclivity for violence sanctioned through moralism. The history of psychoanalysis in India has confronted us with this aspect of the colonial state, whether in the account of Claud Daly's fantasies about the tribal other, or in relation to anthropology in the Nagahills, when those seeking to interpret and curb head-

588. Shakespeare, *Hamle*t, 401
589. Shakespeare, *Hamle*t, 401
590. Cf Nicolas Abraham, "The Phantom of Hamlet *or* The Sixth Act *preceded by* The Intermission of 'Truth'" in Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel: Renewals of Psychoanalysis* trans. Nicholas T. Rand (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 187-205.

hunting become the agents of a frenzied violence, sanctioned in the interests of 'civilisation'.

Making a link between Hamlet, the psyche, and national identity in her unparalleled account of the Balkans, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, Rebecca West wrote:

> after Hamlet and Othello and King Lear it could not be pretended that man was an animal who pursues pleasure and avoids pain. But of nations that pretence is still made. It is assumed that if a nation goes to war, it must have a reasonable motive, based on material calculations, and must desire to be victorious. It is not conceded that a nation should, like Hamlet, say that in its heart there was a fighting that would not let it sleep, or like Othello and King Lear, hatchet its universe to ruin.[591]

Hamlet may turn to the logic of the State to spur his revenge, but he gives pause, questions, and second guesses himself. Speaking of the conscience "gives Hamlet some of his best lines", writes Adam Phillips in an article titled "Against Self-Criticism", suggesting that the strident and punishing voice of conscience requires "imaginative redescriptions" if the individual is to escape being tortured by it.[592] It is the tragedy of nations, West seems to lament, that they are unable to present themselves as troubled, as riven by contradictions. They seem unable to perform the "imaginative redescriptions" that Phillips speaks of, adopting instead a voice that is all too certain, trumpeting its claim to superior knowledge. As our discussions of Wilfred Bion's work have allowed us to note, a position of 'knowing it all' can be the best way to not find out. This account of psychoanalysis in India suggests that much of the knowledge that was produced about the 'primitive' or 'native' other was in the service of avoiding transformative insight that could have led to an ethical relationship with a like but different subject.

In Satyajit Ray's 1970 film *Aranyer Din Ratri* (*Days and Nights in the Forest*), four men from Calcutta take a holiday in Palamau, Bihar, one of the

591. Rebecca West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon: A Journey Through Yugoslavia* (London: Canongate Books, 2006), 1123.
592. Adam Phillips, "Against Self-Criticism." *London Review of Books* 37 no. 5 (2015): 13-16, https://www.lrb.co.uk/v37/n05/adam-phillips/against-self-criticism.

country's forested regions. As they are driving in their car, one of them reads descriptions of the indigenous Santhals from *Palamau*, written by Sanjib Chandra Chatterji: "the women are dark-skinned, and all young. They are scantily dressed and naked from the waist up".[593] Being away from 'civilisation' and coming into contact with tribal women seems to make them act in ways that are unpredictable to themselves and contrary to expectations of men of their social class. The film brings its viewers close to the fantasies which the urban Indian middle class has about 'primitive' tribals, especially tribal women. In an essay that sets out to study "the 'unconscious' as an area of ascription", the literary critic Kumkum Sangari tracks how, for the urban male writer both before and after decolonisation, "the woman and the tribal, separately as well as together, become the 'unconscious' of the nation, the essence of a collectivity."[594] Like Santhal women in Ray's film, they signify something both dangerous and desirable for the urban man who encounters them. Ray's film suggests a continuity between pre- and post-colonial India in how fantasies about primitivity circulated, and the role of anthropology in shaping these fantasies.

In this dissertation, I have attempted to both track how 'primitivity' and 'civilisation' were historically mobilized in colonial India in relation to psychoanalytic writing, and to find, through the work of psychoanalytic thinkers like Freud and Bion, an alternative approach to temporality and the category of the 'primitive'. Some months back as I was completing the thesis, I came across the papers of W.G. Archer and Mildred Archer, both remembered as distinguished commentators on Indian art. An Indian Civil Services Officer posted in the Bihar province, and later the Nagahills, from 1931-1948, W.G. Archer collected and recorded folklore, poetry and paintings in the region and was instrumental in organizing the India collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum. Mildred, his wife, curated the art held by the India Office library. Towards the end of their time in India, Archer was posted in the Naga Hills, a period described by Mildred Archer in her diary from that time. In future work, I hope to explore how this category of the 'primitive' circulated in the Archers' engagement with art and poetics, a project I see

593. Sanjib Chandra Chatterji quoted in Satyajit Ray, *Aranyer Din Ratri,* 1970. The author was Bankim Chandra Chatterji's elder brother.
594. Kumkum Sangari, "Figures for the unconscious: the pressures on description," in *Politics of the Possible: Essays on Gender, History, Narratives, Colonial English.* (London: Anthem Press, 2002), 80.

as being in continuation with this dissertation, not least because the many notes on Sigmund Freud and Ernest Jones in W.G. Archer's papers indicate a sustained interest in psychoanalysis. Mildred Archer's diary, discussed briefly in Chapter 4, is a fascinating account of a crucial period in Indian and Naga political life and one that I would like to return to in order to better understand how the Indian State came to carry out its oppressive policies in the erstwhile Nagahills. The writings of Verrier Elwin, missionary turned Gandhian turned anthropologist, and later Nehru's advisor on 'tribal' affairs, are another key source I hope to draw upon when writing about the persistence of fantasies of primitivity in how the postcolonial State governs—a project begun in this dissertation, that remains ongoing.

It is not only these attitudes to 'primitivity' that have persisted in the aftermath of India's decolonisation. The postcolonial nation has taken on the repressive apparatuses of the colonial state, incorporating into itself the intelligence agencies and the torture chambers that formed the backdrop to the Saha case. This dissertation has drawn attention to colonial violence while offering an account of psychoanalysis as it was practiced in India in the early to mid-twentieth century. Yet the violence did not stop with decolonisation. Partition, Jacqueline Rose suggests in *Proust Among the Nations*, is one of the global legacies of British colonialism.[595] We could add that occupation is another. The aspiration to nationhood, expressed as part of anti-colonial struggles, was realised in India, but only by crushing attempts at self-determination on the part of people who were forced to accede to the newly-created nation. Responses to the Saha case suggest that political upheaval is accompanied by fear of a loss of order, of collective insanity. The tragedy of political life, before and after colonisation, seems to be that the State-superego steps in with prohibitions and prescriptions for punitive action.

In 2013, I was exploring archival material relating to the history of psychoanalysis in India, and trying to piece together the Saha case from old newspapers in the National Library, Calcutta. In the February of that year, in secret, without notice to his family, and with legal process still unfinished, Afzal Guru was executed by the state. In 2006, Guru, a resident of Kashmir, had been sentenced to death in the Indian Parliament Attack Case. In an extraordinary judgement, the Supreme Court said that Afzal had to be hanged to satisfy the "collective

595. Jacqueline Rose, *Proust Among the Nations: From Dreyfus to the Middle East* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

conscience" of the nation.[596] Guru's remains were not returned to his family and the case is enmeshed in allegations of torture and the use of coercive tactics by India's 'intelligence' agencies. At the time, I had wanted to write about the Saha case and Guru's killing together, as two courtroom trials that splice politics and the psyche in a way that lays bare certain fantasies operating in Indian nationalism. I soon realised that this work would be beyond the scope of this dissertation, but Afzal Guru's killing and its justification by the invocation of the 'collective conscience' created questions that have accompanied and spurred my work for this dissertation. In an interview he gave in prison, Guru said that "Kashmir has everything that you don't want to see in a civilized nation. They breathe torture. Inhale injustice".[597] We could not be closer to Freud's insight, discussed in Chapter 1, that there is something obscene about the State: "the state has forbidden to the individual the practice of wrongdoing, not because it desires to abolish it, but because it desires to monopolise it like salt and tobacco."[598]

If these trials attest to the vital link between political and psychic life, working on this dissertation has taught me that neither the psyche nor the political are reducible to each other. If anything, a careless or hasty attempts read one in the terms of the other does injustice to the complexity of either, as the psychoanalytical articles written by Claud Daly and Owen A.R. Berkeley Hill, as well as Tarun Chandra Sinha and Girindrasekhar Bose all seem to suggest. An eloquent account of the difficulty, and urgency, of examining the links between the psyche and political conditions is to be found in Frantz Fanon's classic essay "Colonial War and Mental Disorders". In one of the brief case descriptions in the essay, Fanon describes treating a policeman who carried out interrogations and torture at the police headquarters, and who sought treatment because all through the night, in his own house, he would hear screams. The policeman himself drew a link between the torture and the screaming that he heard, and Fanon writes that in time, the policeman's condition improved, and that he left Algeria for France. Yet knowing the political conditions of the time, can we call this alleviation of suffering a cure? Claud Daly and Berkeley Hill's writings suggests that their conflicted attempt to

596. "The incident, which resulted in heavy casualties, had shaken the entire nation and the collective conscience of the society will only be satisfied if the capital punishment is awarded to the offender." "The Supreme Court Judgement on Afzal Guru" Tehelka, Accessed September 28, 2017 http://www.tehelka.com/2013/02/the-supreme-court-judgement-on-afzal-guru/.
597. Vinod K. Jose and Afzal Guru, "Mulakat Afzal", *Caravan,*1 February, 2006.
598. Freud, "Thoughts for the Times," *SE* 14:279.

reconcile colonialism and a psychoanalytic consideration of the self also created its own forms of suffering. It is one of the sobering conclusions of the history of psychoanalysis in India that psychic distress does not in itself lead to insight, an ethical relationship with an other, or a change in political position. As Berkeley Hill's war-time letters suggest, suffering could be seen as a flaw, as a threat to a cherished self-image.

Most people involved with psychoanalysis in India, in the period that I write of, were men, and with the notable exception of the writers Temsula Ao and Mahasweta Devi, women have occupied a marginal, shadowy place in the writing that I have discussed. Questions of gender and sexuality have nevertheless been critical in interpreting this material, though in the course of writing this dissertation I have found myself speculating what the history of psychoanalysis in India would have looked like had there been more women involved. The figure of Mother India , discussed in the final chapter in this dissertation, alerts us to how an icon of femininity can serve to veil the disenfranchisement of women (this is not to suggest that women themselves are not capable of identifying with forms of idealised nationalist femininity). However, we find that in the postcolonial nation, even Mother India's femininity becomes something to be disavowed.[599] In the letter quoted in the epigraph, Yezdi Gundevia, then Foreign Secretary of India, wrote to William Archer lamenting India's 'femininity'. In an historically inaccurate attribution of Mother India to Gandhi and Tagore, Gundevia alleges that this feminine presence has held India back: "There is a saying attributed to me in Delhi, which goes, somewhat, thus: If Mahatma Gandhi (or was it Rabindranath Tagore) had not taught us to talk about Mother India (pendulous bosoms and all), but had made us think in terms of Father India, with a tight LANGOTE, we might have gone further and, what is more, somewhat faster."[600] A more masculine national identity, signified by the 'langote' a kind of loincloth worn by wrestlers in North India, is what India needs.

In 2014, Narendra Modi was elected the Prime Minister of India, in an election campaign that frequently referred to his *chappan inch ki chaati* (56 inch chest). The years following the election have seen a chauvinist, masculinist Hindu

599. For a discussion of the repudiation of the feminine amongst the Hindu right, see Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Clash Within: Democracy, Religious Violence, and India's Future* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).
600. Yezdi Gundevia to W.G. Archer, 13th March 1975, Papers of W.G. Archer F236-73, IORPP.

nationalism overlaid onto the piety surrounding Mother India and the discourse of honour and propriety that she sets in motion. The lynchings of Muslims and Dalits over the past years, the imprisonment and political murders of dissidents (while I was writing this, news came that journalist Gauri Lankesh, a committed critic of the right-wing, was shot at point blank range by unidentified men)—Modi's government has lived up to its promises. At times like these, a complex, contradictory account of the past, and forms of thinking that help us accommodate ambivalence, such as literature and psychoanalysis, offer possibilities of rethinking exclusionary and belligerent forms of group identity. Even if, in this attempt, what comes to mind is the allusion made by Freud in his correspondence with Einstein on ways of preventing war, to an image of "mills that grind so slowly that people may starve before they get their flour".[601]

601. Freud, "Why War," *SE* 22: 213.

Appendix I

Shakchi, Killer and Artist
Story written by J.P. Mills

William Archer Papers, MSS Eur F236/230, IORPP

Yimlong felt happy that evening as he sat by the fire in his house and sipped a bamboo cup of warm rice beer. He had found a tiger's kill in the morning that was five days old and stank to heaven, but there had been more than enough fairly firm meat on it to provide a tasty supper, with plenty of chillies added to bring out the flavour. It was a pity his wife would not be able to share it with him, but she was pregnant, and immemorial Naga custom forbids pregnant women to eat meat from kills. She had already borne him a daughter who would bring him a good price in cattle when the time came for her to marry, and this time she might give him a son to carry on the line and to be as great a headhunter as his forefathers. Anyhow the child ought to be a strong one, for he was a noted warrior and his wife was not one of those weakly women who sat idly about for a whole day before they were brought to bed. She had done a full days [sic] work that day and in the evening had carried a load of rice as heavy as a good-sized pig from the fields in the valley to the village on the hilltop.

True she was not as lucky as some women he had known, who had gone down to work as usual in in [sic] the morning and in the evening had climbed the long ascent with a newborn baby in their baskets. A child born in the fields in this way always had good crops and became wealthy later in life. But this son of his, if son it should turn out to be, even if poor, would surely be a mighty raider, for only three months before Yimlong had killed a man of Pongling, the village further along the ridge with which they had been at war as far back as memory went, and the virtue of that deed would enter into the child. When, therefore, late that night a son was born to him and he spoke to the infant the traditional words "Thou art a man. Be brave and kill" as he placed a little model spear in the tiny hands he knew that his wish would be fulfilled.

Thus did Shakchi begin a life in which he was long to seek adventure [sic?] rather than safe ease. Only now that middle age has come to him does he leave the fighting to others.

For two years the child lived an uneventful life with his parents in his home at Hukching on a spur of the great range that divides Assam from Burma. Strange-looking Sahibs, with skins so pale that it seemed as if the sun had never ripened their bodies, had imposed peace on the tribes to the East and West, but between the frontiers there there [sic] was ample territory where men could still win renown by bringing in the human heads that make crops and cattle to flourish. Shakchi, of course, knew nothing of all this. From time to time he saw raiders welcomed as they returned with their gory trophies, or he would go with his father into the great guardhouses that no women was [sic] allowed to enter, and gaze at the rows of grinning skulls. But he was too young to understand it all, and war had not yet come near him. In the village he was safe enough behind a dense hedge of cane and a double bamboo palisading, and he never left it except under guard. Every morning he rode on his mother's hip as she joined the long procession to the fields. First went picked scouts, with shields on their left arms and spears poised, peering and watching for a twisted leaf which would betray an ambush. Then came the women, naked but for little skirts that hardly reached halfway down to their thighs and laden with baskets and babies. There was a sprinkling of armed men among them and a strong guard brought up the rear. Once down at the fields the families scattered to their respective plots, and it was then that the danger was greatest. Sentries were posted, but they could not watch every hollow of the broken ground and every yard of the encircling jungle. There were little gullies along which an enemy might creep unseen, and it was from one of these that tragedy first came into Shakchi's life. He was too small to walk down to the fields and back, and he was getting very heavy to carry. So his parents got more and more into the habit of leaving him at home with his grandmother, who was his slave and never happier than when she was playing with him. One day the wrinkled old dame was sitting weaving and talking to her cronies while the boy ran about in the almost deserted village, when there was a sudden shout from a sentry and two panting messengers brought news of disaster. "Yimlong is dead. Men of Pongling have killed him" was all they could gasp out at first. Not till the villagers had come streaming up from the fields were the details known.

Yimlong's plot was on the edge of the block of shifting cultivation the villagers were doing that year and was bounded on one side by a gully of which the sides, too steep and rocky for crops, had been left uncleared. His daughter was big enough now to lend a useful hand to her parents and all three were bending over their weeding in in [sic] a fold of the ground that hid them from the workers in neighbouring plots when the pad of running feet from the direction of the gully caused them to look quickly round. Six men of Pongling were charging towards them, and checked [sic?] to throw their spears as their victims stood for an instant. Yimlong was brought down by a spear in his knee, and his wife turned and stumbled feebly away, pulling at a shaft which transfixed her stomach, while the little girl, untouched, ran shrieking after her mother. Yimlong, unable to rise to his feet, sat up in an instant and drew his "dao". Two men of Pongling raced for the honour of taking his head. One, an impetuous youth, came a foot too near before he struck. Up swung the heavy blade of the sitting cripple and sheered through his ribs, and Yimlong had killed his last man before the other attacker clove him from left shoulder to right breast. He died too soon to see his wife and daughter cut down. It was all over in a moment and the three headless bodies and a dead raider marked the scene of tragedy. The shrieks had brought armed men tearing in from all directions, but the raiders had a good start and the pursuers returned tired and angry. There was nothing to be done but to carry the three bodies up to the village and lay them on the corpse-platforms with scant ceremony, since with their heads the men of Pongling had borne their souls away into exile. The head, hands and feet of the dead raider were cut off and the trunk thrown into the jungle to rot, but these trophies made small amends for the death of a noted warrior and his family.

Shakchi immediately went to live with his father's brother, whom he had always addressed as "little father". From childish play he passed to mimic war games, hurling his reed spear at the opposing side and learning to fend off missiles with his little shield. Sometimes boys were hurt or even killed, at this sport, but no one minded much as long as the rising generation grew up hard and manly. When he was about eight he ceased to sleep in his uncle's house and spend the nights and much of the days in the guard house of his clan, fagging for the older boys and listening to the talk of the men. He knew from childhood that he must never have anything to do with girls of his own clan, but it was not many years before he learnt to steal off, when all was dark and still, to the sleeping houses where girls of other

clans congregated and a whispered welcome awaited him, slipping back to his own guard-house before dawn. He could only remember his parents dimly and his father's name was rarely mentioned, since he had died by an enemy's hand. But he nursed an undying longing for vengeance and when he was a strapping youth chance brought him his opportunity and a miraculous escape from death.

A truce had just been patched up between Hukching and Pongling. Their lands adjoined and every few years the rotation of shifting cultivation compelled them to clear and sow blocks near their common boundary. "You cannot eat heads" is a common Naga saying, and crops had to be grown even if it meant a curtailment of the pleasant sport of headhunting. When therefore the two villages cultivated adjacent blocks war had to cease between them to enable them [to] sow and reap in reasonable safety. Thus it was this year. Envoys carrying green boughs had gone to and fro between Hukching and Pongling to call the old men to a meeting on the boundary. There, after the shouting, boasting and abuse that public opinion demanded, a truce till after harvest had been arranged. It was understood however that members of one village would not visit the other, thought they were only six miles apart. That would have been asking for trouble.

One day Shakchi was restless. At night he had held Aminla's firm young body in his arms and asked her if she would be his always, and she had said he could be her lover, but never her husband till he had avenged his father and proved himself a man. He was bound by the truce, but in the morning, with some vague idea of reconnoitring the ground, he moodily, and without telling anyone, set out alone along the ridge to Pongling armed only with his "dao", his inseparable companion. Before the gate of the village came in sight he found the usual advance sentry on a platform on a platform in a tree. Shakchi called cheerfully up to him to come down and talk, and the sentry did the first of several foolish things – he came down. The second foolish thing he did was to talk too much. Since the two villages were constantly at war men in one might know men in the other by name and repute, but very rarely by sight. The sentry knew the stranger must be a Hukching man, and by an incredible chance asked him if he knew a youth called Shakchi! Shakchi was on his guard at once but not a muscle of his face showed it and with a smile he said he did slightly and that he was a useless weakling. The sentry thereupon laughed and said he had only asked because his father had happened to kill Shakchi's father. Shakchi instantly determined to kill him, truce or no truce, but he showed that

coolness which was so often to stand him in good stead. He had to take the sentry at a disadvantage. At the moment the odds were against Shakchi, for while both men carried their long "daos" sheathed on their backs so that the handles protruded over their right shoulders ready to be instantly drawn, the sentry had a spear in his hand. Shakchi therefore led him along the path talking. Walking on the right he casually drew his "dao" and began flicking at the tall grass stems. When he saw that the sentry suspected nothing Shakchi, too close to him for him to use his spear, swung suddenly to the left and aimed a terrific blow at his neck. By evil chance the heavy blade flew out of the haft and sailed into jungle. As quick as thought the sentry's hand went up to draw his "dao", but Shakchi, unarmed, leapt on him, bore him to the ground, wrenched the half-drawn "dao" from his hand and killed him with it. One more stroke and Shakchi picked up his first head and raced for home.

He had no qualms about the welcome he would get, for he know that satisfaction at the death of a warrior from hated Pongling would far outweigh any such detail as the breach of a truce. After all a head was a head, and the men of Pongling, if it had been they who had broken the truce, would have been the first to maintain that a head got by treachery was better than none at all. And had not his provocation been extreme? No man, in Naga opinion, could have been expected to spare in any circumstances what-ever the son of the man who had killed his father. There was therefore unmixed triumph in his voice as, safe from pursuit, he breasted the last slope from the saddle, chanting the victor's song that brought people running to the gate. He did not enter the village at once; that would have been a gross breach of custom. Instead sat with his trophy on the ground beside him while he told his story and waited for messengers to bring workers from the fields.

Among the first to arrive was his aunt, carrying a meal of rice and meat on a leaf, and a bamboo cup of rice beer. Having appeased the malignant ghost of his victim by tossing aside for it a little of the food and spilling a few drops of beer on the ground Shakchi ate and drank with unwashed hands. He had, of course, heard the story that somewhere in the unknown mountains to the east there was a village of men who ate human flesh, but he would have denied with surprised disgust and indignation that this ceremonial meal with blood stained hands was itself a last relic of forgotten cannibalism. Yet it was so.

By the time he had finished the village had assembled in full force to welcome him, and the procession started. It was the proudest moment of his life.

First went the oldest warrior of the village, clutching the head in his skinny hand and hobbling along with the aid of his spear. Then came Shakchi, blood stained "dao" on shoulder, and behind him the men of the village, chanting and twirling their spears. Along the single plank over the deep ditch they went and through the gate. Within the women, all in their best, lined the path. Among them was Aminla with flowers in her ears and her young breasts almost hidden by strings of beads, many of them borrowed from friends eager to deck her out to greet her acknowledged lover. One glance at her face as he took her proffered drink and Shakchi knew he had won her. But he had no time then for thoughts of love; there were pressing ceremonies afoot. Before the guard-house at the end of the long street stood a monolith with a recumbent slab in front of it. On this slab the old man laid the head, where hundreds had been laid before. Gently he set it down, for it was to be welcomed, not insulted. Then he placed flowers in the grey, bloodless ears, and food and drink between the sagging lips, and called on the captured soul to eat and be happy and summon its relations and friends to a like fate. Once or twice the men circled the stones singing, and then all dispersed to prepare for the feast and dance.

Shakchi slipped away on a mission of his own. His feat had gained him the right to put on the ornaments of a warrior. Most of these were only worn on special occasions and could wait till he had accumulated the rice wherewith to buy them. But he had longed for a pair of shell ear discs since boyhood, for those who had won them wore them always and to be without them marked a man as one who had never taken a head. Now the right was his and he went straight off to a friend's house and borrowed a spare pair. His next visit was to an old man of his clan, who after a few words from Shakchi, put a think iron spike to heat in the glowing embers of his fire. By the time a cup of beer had been consumed the spike was ready and, holding each of Shakchi's ears in turn, he pushed the iron through the sizzling flesh. Then he threaded short pieces of thick cord through the holes and hung the discs from them. Not a sign of pain did Shakchi show during this operation, nor all the long hours that he danced that night and the heavy discs sawed at the raw flesh. Round and round the dancers swung, with slow step and deep-chested chant, as they sang of the heroes of old and of Shakchi, the hero of the day. Rice beer flowed and from time to time girls held lumps of salt to the dancers' lips that they might nibble at them and stimulate their jaded thirst. But there was no orgy of drink and sex. Old men dropped out and went to bed as the Eastern sky began to lighten, and the young men danced

on, wearily but soberly. They knew that Pongling, furious at their loss, would sent scouts to watch from the dark fringe of jungle outside the fence and bring back instant word if there were signs that an avenging raid at dawn would find a drunken and defenceless foe. But the scouts saw that the village was on the alert and did not wait to watch the rays of the rising sun strike the diminished ring of dancers croaking out a last song before they dispersed for breakfast and a rest. A few days later the old men of the village cleaned the skull and ornamented it with tasselled buffalo horns, bound on where the ears had been. It was then ready to hang up in the guard-house with the smoke blackened trophies of former raids.

Pongling thirsted for vengeance, but Hukching were thoroughly on the alert, and their thirst was unassuaged. That winter Shakchi collected timber, bamboos and thatch and built a new house for himself and Aminla, and married her. His care-free days were over. His uncle had provided cattle for the marriage price, but henceforth the young man had to support himself and his wife. And he was not content with a mere subsistence, for he was an artist in his unwashed finger tips, and loved beautiful things. Having won the right to wear a warrior's ornaments he could not rest till he had bought them, and this meant he had to grow enough rice and millet to provide a surplus wherewith to barter. This compelled him to work steadily and hard, and for the next year or two only the passion that his young wife returned prevented him from finding life monotonous, though for a civilized man, to whom war is something abnormal, the constant raids and counter-raids would have provided more than enough excitement. Always there was danger, for, if they were not to starve, work in the fields, far from the protection of the village defences, had to go on, however great the hostile pressure. The jungle on the blocks [sic?], cut in the winter and left to dry, was fired in the spring. The day of burning always provided sport and amusement. From the new, "clean" spark which the village priest kindled by friction the fire spread till a line of flame swept roaring up the hillside, and dense smoke gathered in the sky to form the monsoon clouds, as the villagers thought. Jungle fowl flew ahead cackling, and terrified deer and pig bolted for safety only to find their retreat cut off by waiting spearmen. The skill with which allowance was made for the slow-moving missiles was extraordinary, and a galloping deer that tried to pass a spearman twenty yards away was doomed. After the burning the ground had to be cleared of charred logs, and men and women were black with ash from head to foot for days, - and for nights too, for when all water has to be laboriously carried up in

hollow bamboos from a spring below the village there is none to spare for baths. Then came the sowing and weeks of weeding in the streaming rain of the monsoon, and at last the harvest on which their very lives depended.

One head was not enough for Shakchi. He had won a warrior's ornaments, but he yearned to see his chest decorated with a warrior's tattoo. It would have been unseemly to have had this done after killing only one enemy. Etiquette laid down that he must take three or four heads and thereby prove himself a fighter of outstanding merit before he could proceed to the supreme honours. Opportunities were not lacking, but it was a hard task. In a land where war is the rule and peace the exception wariness is highly developed, and watchful eyes note every movement in the jungle, every twisted leaf or blade of grass, and every track however faint. Time and time again raiders prowled near the paths Hukching used, in the hope of catching a man or woman unawares, and time and again the men of Hukching retaliated. But nearly always the guards were on the alert and it was many months before Shakchi could achieve his object.

When he had he faced an ordeal of pain. The tattooer and his assistants took him to a quiet place outside the village, where his groans, if any, were forced from him, could not be heard. There he lay down and the tattooer drew with soot on the pale brown skin of his chest and stomach two thick lines curving up from his navel over his two breasts, where they ended in broad spirals. Then, taking a little bundle of thorns and a small wooden hammer, he tapped out the pattern with hundreds of punctures and literally engraved it on the living flesh, while his assistants held the patient's quivering limbs and wiped away the blood from time to time when it flowed so fast as to hinder the operator. On the chest the pain was bearable, but the tap-tap of the thorns into the delicate nerves of the stomach was agony almost past endurance. Beads of sweat stood on Shakchi's face, but he never uttered a moan. At last the tapping was over, a mixture of soot and sap was rubbed into the punctures, and he staggered to his house.

Some of Shakchi's raids had been distant ones, through hostile country that could only be crossed at night, to villages made careless by the belief that the allies who surrounded them were a sufficient barrier against attack. But, ever a man of foresight, he was careful not to stir up hostility with the tribes lying between his home and the British border. This was for two reasons. Firstly he realised, from what he had heard, that raids near the frontier were apt to lead to trouble, and to very

serious trouble indeed if a wandering British subject, impossible to tell on sight from an independent Naga, happened to be killed by mistake. Secondly he had always wanted to see a white man, and so he took care to keep his road open to do so. He was proud, and had always meant to meet the Sahib as an equal, and this he felt he could do now that his tattoo and finery proclaimed his prowess to the world. One day, therefore, with half a dozen companions he walked into camp when the officer in charge was touring along that section of the frontier. The contrast with the drab figure in khaki shirt and shorts was striking enough, and Shakchi's appearance is worth a brief description, for there is assuredly no finer dress in India than that of a Naga warrior. On his head was a tall helmet of the finest plaited scarlet cane, topped by an upstanding crest of scarlet goat's hair. His ears were decorated with the prized shell discs he had worn so uncomfortably that day he took his first head, and round his neck was a collar of huge boar's tushes. His naked torso showed every rippling muscle, and round a waist that a dandy would have envied he wore a broad belt of cowries, from which hung his only garment, a little red and dark blue apron embroidered with the figure of a man in cowries. On his legs were greaves and on his wrists gauntlets of canework like that of the helmet, and polished sections of elephant tusk ornamented his upper arms. His spear was in his hand and his trusty "dao" sheathed on his back. His face was grave as he offered the Sahib a drink of rice beer, but the smile with which it was received brought an answering smile of great charm. On that day began a friendship which has never been broken, rare though meetings have needs been.

Curiously enough this friendship once almost cost Shakchi his life, and only a miracle averted a horrible tragedy. It befell as follows. The Sahib was touring across the frontier with an escort, and Shakchi, hearing of this, set out to meet him. But the journey was a long one and a moonless night had fallen by the time he reached the village near which the camp had been pitched. The perimeter had long been closed and sentries posted at the gate. Shakchi was impatient to see his friend and would not wait till morning. Having ascertained, therefore, in the village the exact whereabouts of the camp he walked boldly towards one of the gates, carrying a live chicken as a present. The sentry, hearing footsteps and seeing a dim figure, called out "Halt! Who goes there?", giving his challenge in English as he had been taught to do. The visitor, knowing nothing of military ways and discipline, thought the sentry was calling to some friend in the camp in an unknown tongue and, taking

no notice at all, walked straight on. Up went the sentry rifle, and his finger was on the trigger to fire at point blank range when Shakchi's chicken squawked. That squawk saved his life. The sentry guessed the stranger must be someone with a present, and therefore presumably friendly, and held his fire till Shakchi came right up to the gate and was recognised, smiling and sublimely ignorant of how near death he had been.

From the first the white man saw in his friend a man of great personality – brave, treacherous to his enemies but true to his friends, intelligent, artistic, and possessed to a very definite mind of his own. He has never been merely conventional. True he has followed custom in seeking renown in war, but that was because the danger and excitement appealed to him. He has always differed from most of his fellow Nagas in caring nothing for wealth. He is too artistic and dilettante for that. His fingers are never idle. The urge to create something seems to be always upon him, savage though he is according to our standards. He is one of those rare men who make a definite contribution to the artistic achievements of a tribe. His carvings, on which he spends so much time, are of the traditional tribal patterns with something new added. They are very fine, and some of the best are in England now.

Few Nagas are misers. Money is almost unknown to them and one cannot very well hoard grain, which will rot, or cattle, which are liable to die in an epidemic or be killed by tigers. Most of Shakchi's compatriots slaved all their lives accumulating rice and cattle, not to keep, but to spend on the great Feasts of Merit which brought them social eminence. Every tribe has its fixed series and a man gains in distinction as he rises from grade to grade. The first is a homely affair. A pig is killed and a few households are entertained. Then come bigger feasts, in which cattle have to be slaughtered in every increasing numbers and more and more vats of rice beer are emptied, till the supreme feast at which bison are the victims and the whole village is entertained. Two or three of these great feasts were given every winter and Shakchi thoroughly enjoyed them. He could not see why he should toil for years to give them when there were other people ready to oblige; his prowess in war and his shrewdness gave him all the position in the village he wanted. The entertainments lasted for days and many animals had to be slaughtered for meat, but the culmination was the ceremonial killing of a bull bison without blemish. Reluctant though the British are to interfere with ancient customs they have felt compelled to check the

awful cruelty of these sacrifices and enforce more humane methods of killing wherever their rule extends. Shakchi's village was, however, free from all control and he himself never a gave a thought to the cruelty, seeing only a custom that had come down from time immemorial. There stood the splendid, placid beast, tethered to a post in front of the house of the giver of the feast, watching the ring of dancers with bewildered eyes. Suddenly, when the moment came, someone would unloose it and the young men would wrestle with it till it was mad with terror. One or two might be injured, but even its enormous strength would be unavailing against numbers and at last it would be thrown. Instantly the tendons of its hind legs were slashed so that it could never rise again and while it was still alive the men hacked lumps of flesh from it haunches and, disembowelling it, fought for its entrails. Soon the blood covered, shrieking maniacs were driven off and the dance went on till morning.

It was all horrible, but it was a reaction against the monotony of village life, though no one was conscious of that monotony. The round of feasts and ceremonies provided all the diversion Shakchi and other men of his age wanted. He continues to act in defence of his village when required, but he left the raiding to younger men. His short-lived youth was over and his hot blood was beginning to cool. He had taken all the heads he wanted, and work in the fields all day and a little carving by the fire in the evening gave him enough to so. Yet fate had one more narrow escape in store for him. It came of a plan he never relished. Sowa, a great village of five hundred houses or more, had becomes an intolerable nuisance. Its braves raided far and wide with impunity and their boasts of the size and strength of their village came filtering through and were a constant irritant. To put an end to the trouble there was formed that very rare thing, a Naga confederacy. Over a wide area villages ordinarily at war sent messages of peace to one another, and a meeting of delegates was held to decide on the measures to be taken to teach Sowa a lesson it would never forget. It was not just a matter of sending out an invincible host to overwhelm it by sheer weight of numbers in a surprise attack. There was a serious obstacle in the way of any such straightforward plan as that. Less than a mile from Sowa on the side towards its enemies and on the ridge along which an attacking force would have to come lay a small village called Ukha, ostensibly friendly to Sowa and certainly afraid of its big neighbour. The problem before the delegates was how to deal with Ukha. One method would have been to surround it and wipe it out. But the feeling of

the meeting was against this. Not that anyone pitied the small village; rather the temptation of easy heads was a sore one. But it was realized that a single fugitive would be enough to give alarm to Sowa, even if they did not hear the shouting and cries, and so spoil the whole plan, for no force armed with spears and "daos" could hope to breach the palisade of the big village if its defenders were on the alert. The only alternative was to win Ukha over to the confederacy, and this it was decided to attempt, great though the rise of treachery was. Shakchi and many others disliked this plan, but could suggest no other way out of the difficulty.

A go-between from a neutral village having made sure that messengers would be given safe conduct, a small party slipped through the gate of Ukha after dusk one evening. Long was the whispered talk they had in the chief's house, squatting with their "daos" untrustingly ready on the floor by their right hands. But there was no sudden attack and the message they took back was that Ukha would side with them against the bullies. It was agreed that the attackers should reach the village before dawn on the tenth morning from then, and be given food and rest before they made their final rush. One the appointed day a strong party of picked men set out, and among them was Shakchi. He was full of foreboding, but his reputation as a warrior was a thing he really valued and he could not hang back. Anyhow there was one house in Ukha where he would be safe, for his family and the owners' were bound by ties of ancestral friendship which made treachery impossible. Cold and soaked with dew the attackers crept into the village when the sky over Burma was only tinged with the glorious primrose light that heralds the dawn. Shakchi went straight to his friend's house. His friend seemed to be strung up and ill-at-ease, but Shakchi thought it was only the excitement natural at such a moment. He sat on the stool while the embers on the hearth were blown into a flame, and watched his host bring a tall bamboo cup from the inner room and offer it to him. It seemed strangely light when he took it, and when he lifted it to his lips it was empty! Quicker than thought he threw it down, picked up his shield and spear, and dashed to the door, drawing his "dao" as he did so. The empty cup was a warning he understood. Ukha, terrified of the vengeance of their powerful neighbours, had broken their word and warned them of the coming attack. Even now the village might be surrounded and the expedition in a trap. Shakchi's host had done his best; he had tried to warn his friend without revealing the plans of his own village. The moment Shakchi reached the open he knew that his worst fears were realized and the

situation desperate. A spear rattled on his shield as he ran, and he cleared in his stride a man of his own village lying coughing out his life with a blade in his throat. A Sowa warrior slashed at him in the half light, but he swerved and felled his opponent with a sweeping backhander. There was no time to take his head. The only chance of escape lay in instant flight. The gates, he knew, would be full of enemies streaming in. So he dashed to the side of the village where there was no fence and the cliff fell sheer. There he leapt, and his usual luck was with him. A tree growing out from the cliff broke his fall and he climbed along it to safety. Cautiously he worked his way back to the path along which the expedition had come, and there he met more stragglers. The Sowa men were busy with the dead and wounded and the retreat was unharassed. The losses were less than might have been expected, for the bad light ---ed [page torn] the desperate men as they climbed or broke down the palisade and charged through the encircling enemy. But it was a crestfallen party that dispersed to their villages and Shakchi yearned for the warpath less than ever. He is a middle aged man now, as Nagas go, and has done with raiding. He is happier sitting over his carving thinking of his old enemies – and of his old friends too.

GAONBURA

J.P. Mills

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archival Sources and Newspapers

British Psychoanalytic Society, London.

Ernest Jones Collection:

Bose, Girindrasekhar. *Girindrasekhar Bose to Ernest Jones, 15 July 1921*. P04/C/B/10.

———. *Girindrasekhar Bose to Ernest Jones, 30 March 1922*. P04/C/B/10.

Jones, Ernest. *Ernest Jones to Girindrasekhar Bose, 9 August 1921.* P04/C/B/10.

———. *Ernest Jones to Girindrasekhar Bose, 8 May 1922*. P04/C/B/10.

———. *Ernest Jones to M.N. Banerji, 23 December 1936*. P04/C/B/10.

Berkeley Hill, Owen. *Owen Berkeley Hill to Ernest Jones, 5 November 1915*. P04/C/G/02.

Claud Daly Collection:

Daly, Claud D. *Journals.* P06-B.

Freud Museum, London.

Sigmund Freud Archive:

'Reply to Mein Kampf' in Daily Clarion, Sydney, 24 December 1938. Press Cuttings.

Anna Freud Archive:

Daly, Claud D. *C.D. Daly to Anna Freud*. Letter, n.d. (September 1939?) AF/03/06/033.

India Office Records and Private Papers, London.

Archer,Mildred. *Journal Deposited by Mildred Archer, wife of William George Archer, I.C.S. 1931-1948*. Mss Eur F236/353.

Gundevia, Yezdi. *Yezdi Gundevia to W.G. Archer, 13th March 1975*. Mss Eur F236-73.

Mills, James. *Shakchi, Killer and Artist*, MSS Eur F236/203.

Pelham, Arnold. *Letter of Recommendation 4 March 1906, Oxford*. L/MIL/9/423.

Phizo, A.P. *The Fate of the Naga People: An Appeal to the World*. Mss Eur F236/ 230.

Taylor,S.G. *'Sir Charles Tegart'*. Mss Eur F 161/247.

Tegart, Kathleen. *Charles Tegart: Memoir of an Indian Policeman*. Mss Eur C.235/1.

Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

Sigmund Freud Collection, Manuscripts Division:

Hanns Sachs. *Hanns Sachs to Ernest Jones, 6 November 1939*. Letter, Box 1, Folder 24, Ernest Jones Papers 1921-1958.

Franz Alexander, *Franz Alexander to Ernest Jones, 16 November 1939.* Letter, Box 1, Folder 24, Ernest Jones Papers 1921-1958.

London School of Economics Library Archives

C.G. Seligman Papers:

Seligman, C.G. "*Correspondence: Type Dreams: A Request" in Folk-Lore: Transactions of the Folklore Society December 1923* and *"Note on Dreams" in Man, nos. 119-120, December 1923*. Box 8: 'Articles 1903-1961'.

National Archives of India, Delhi.

Atkinson, A.C. and W.W. Kennedy, *Report to the Committee of the Calcutta Branch of the European Association Calcutta the 20th July 1920*. File no. 88, Home Department, Jails 1921- 1922.

O'Kinealy, Lieutenant Colonel F. *Triennial Report on the Lunatic Asylums in Bengal for the years 1918,1919 and 1920*. File no. 96/3, Home Department, Jails 1921-1922.

Berkeley Hill, Owen. *Report of the European Mental Hospital at Ranchi for the Triennium 1921-23*. File no. 11/II/25, Home Department, Jails 1925.

Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Delhi.

Reports on Native Newspapers, January-June 1924.

Pitt Rivers Museum Collection, Oxford.

Hutton Papers:

Bhuyyan, SK. *Speech made by Prof. S.K. Bhuyyan in proposing Dr. J.H. Hutton to the chair, on the 13th anniversary of the Kamrupa Anusandhana Samiti (Assam Research Society) held at Gauhati on October 27, 1925*. Box 3.

Hutton, J.H. *"Anthropology as an Imperial Science," Inaugural lecture, Cambridge 1938.* Box 3.

———. *Untitled note on dreams in an inspection bungalow in Baisho*. Box 3.

———. *Untitled table of dreams.* Box 3.

Seligman, C.G. *Charles Seligman to James Mills, 11 October 1923*. Box 3.

———. *Note on Dreams.* Box 3.

Mills Papers

Mills, James. *Letter from James Mills to Henry Balfour, 23 July 1923.*

———. *James Mills to Henry Balfour, 11 September 1923.*

Newspapers

Amrita Bazaar Patrika, 1924.

The Bengalee, 1924.

The Indian Daily News, 1924.

The Hindu, 1921.

The Statesman, 1920.

Literature Cited

Abraham, Nicolas and Maria Torok. *The Shell and the Kernel: Renewals of Psychoanalysis*. Translated by Nicholas T. Rand. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

Anonymous. "History of the Indian Psycho-Analytical Society." *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 4, (Jan- Apr, 1923): 250.

———."Chronicle of Events 1924." *The Indian Quarterly Register Being A Quarterly Digest of Indian Public Affairs* 1, (Jan-Mar 1924): 4-16.

———.“Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council January-March 1924.” *The Indian Quarterly Register Being A Quarterly Digest of Indian Public Affairs* 1, (Jan-Mar 1924): 377-432.

——— .“Viceroy’s Opening Address” in *The Indian Quarterly Register Being A Quarterly Digest of Indian Public Affairs* 1, (Jan-Mar 1924): 115-120.

Akhtar, Salman and Pratyusha Tummala Narra, eds. *Freud Along the Ganges: Psychoanalytic Reflections on the People and Culture of India.* New Delhi: Stanza, 2008.

Althusser, Louis. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays.* Translated by Ben Brewster. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001.

Ambedkar, B.R. *Annihilation of Caste.* London: Verso, 2014.

Amin, Shahid. *Event Metaphor Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922-1992.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Ao, Temsula. *These Hills Called Home*. New Delhi: Penguin, 2006.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966.

Aurobindo, *On Nationalism*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1965.

———. *Bande Mataram: Early Political Writings.* Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1973.

Banerji M.N. “The Indian Psychoanalytical Society.” *Bulletin of the International Psychoanalytic Association* 6 (1925): 241.

Bankimcandra Chatterji. *Ānandamath, or The Sacred Brotherhood*. Translated with an Introduction by Julius L. Lipner. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Benjamin, Jessica. *The Bonds of Love*. New York: Pantheon, 1988.

———. *Like Subjects, Love Objects: Essays on Recognition and Sexual Difference.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

Benjamin,Walter. *Illuminations.* Translated by Harry Zohn. New York: Schocken, 2007.

Berkeley Hill, Owen A.R. *All Too Human.* London: Peter Davies, 1939.

———.“A Case of Paranoid Dissociation.” *Psychoanalytic Review* 9 (1922):1-27.

———.“The ‘Color Question’ From a Psychoanalytic Standpoint.” *Psychoanalytic Review* 11, (1924): 246-253.

———.“The Anal-Erotic Factor in the Religion, Philosophy and Character of the Hindus.” *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 2, (1921):306-338.

Bersani, Leo. *The Culture of Redemption.* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1990.

———. *The Freudian Body Psychoanalysis and Art*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016.

Bettelheim, Bruno. *Freud and Man's Soul.* London: Pimlico, 2001.

Bion,Wilfred. *All My Sins Remembered*. London: Karnac, 1991.

———. *Cogitations.* London, Karnac, 2005.

———. *Experiences in Groups*. New York: Routledge, 1961.

———. *Learning from Experience*. London: Karnac, 1984.

———. *Second Thoughts.* London: Karnac, 2007.

———. *The Long Week-End*. London: Karnac, 2005.

———. *War Memoirs.*With an Introduction by Francesca Bion and Afterword by Parthenope Bion Talamo. London: Karnac, 2014.

———. "The War of Nerves: Civilian Reaction, Morale and Prophylaxis." In the *Complete Work of Wilfred Bion* 4 (London: Karnac 2014).

Bollas, Christopher. *Cracking Up: The Work of Unconscious Experience.* London: Routledge, 1995.

———. *When the Sun Bursts: The Enigma of Schizophrenia.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015.

———. *Being a Character: Psychoanalysis and Self Experience.* London: Routledge, 1992.

Borch Jacobsen, Mikkel. "The Freudian Subject, from Politics to Ethics." *October* 39, (Winter: 1986): 109-127.

———. *The Freudian Subject.* Translated by Catherine Porter. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988.

Bose, Girindrasekhar. *A New Theory of Mental Life.* Calcutta: Indian Psychoanalytical Society, 1933.

———. *Concept of Repression.* Kolkata: Bangiya Kala Kendra, 2009 (1921).

——— . *Everyday Psycho-Analysis.* Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1945.

———. "Manuser Mon." *Prabasi* 30, no 1 (Asad, 1337 [1930]): 339-353.

———. *Svapna*. Kolkata: Vivekananda Book Centre, 2013.

——— and Sigmund Freud. *The Beginnings of Psychoanalysis in India*. Calcutta: The Indian Psychoanalytical Society, 1999.

Bowie, Malcolm. "Memory and Desire in Freud's Civilisation and its Discontents."

New Formations 26, (Autumn 1995): 1-14.

Brabant, E., E. Falzedar, P. Giampieri-Deutsch, eds. *The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sándor Ferenczi.* Translated by Peter Hoffer. London: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Bray, Denys ed. *Ethnographic Survey of Baluchistan.* Bombay: Times Press, 1913.

Brecht, Bertolt. *Die Dreigroschenoper*. Berlin: edition suhrkamp, 1968.

———. *The Threepenny Opera.* Translated by Eric Bentley. London: Mass Market Paperback Evergreen, 1964.

Brickman, Celia. *Aboriginal Populations in the Mind*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

Butler, Judith. *Parting Ways:Jewishness and the Critique of Zion*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014.

Caroe, Olaf. *The Pathans: 550 BC – AD 1957*. London: Kegan Paul, 2000.

Carson, Anne. *Eros the Bittersweet.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.

Caygill, Howard. "Walter Benjamin's Concept of Cultural History." In *The Cambridge Companion to Walter Benjamin* edited by David Ferris, 73-96. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Cerderlōf, Gunnel. *Founding an empire on India's North Eastern Frontiers 1790-1840.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Chaudhari, Nupur "Memsahibs and their servants in nineteenth century India" *Women's History Review* 3, (1994): 549-562.

Anlin Cheng, Anne. *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation and Hidden Grief.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Copjec, Joan. *Imagine There's No Woman: Ethics and Sublimation.* Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 2002.

———. *Read my Desire: Lacan against the Historicists.* London: Verso, 2015.

Daly, Claud. "The Psychology of Revolutionary Tendencies" *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 11, (1930): 193-210.

———."The Role of Menstruation in Human Phlyogenesis and Ontogenesis" *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 24, (1943): 151-170.

Das, Devajyoti. *Girindrasekhara Vasu*. Calcutta: Vangiya Sahitya Parisat, 1971.

Davidson, Arnold I. "Assault on Freud," *London Review of Books* 6, no. 7 (1984): 9-11.

———.“How to do the History of Psychoanalysis: A Reading of Freud’s ‘Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality’.” *Critical Inquiry* 13, no. 2, (Winter 1987): 252-277.

Devi, Mahasweta. *Breast Stories*. Translated with commentary by Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak. Calcutta: Seagull, 1998.

Devji, Faisal. *The Impossible Indian: Gandhi and the Temptation of Violence*. London: Hurst & Co., 2012.

Dolar, Mlladen. “‘I shall be with you on your wedding night’ Lacan and the Uncanny.” *October* 58, (Autumn, 1991): 5-23.

Dolittle, Hilda. *Tribute to Freud.* Manchester: Carcanet, 1985.

Dube, Ishita. *A History of Modern India*. Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Edmundson, Mark. *The Death of Sigmund Freud.* London: Bloomsbury, 2007.

Elias, Norbert. *The Civilizing Process.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2016.

Elwin, Verrier, ed. *The Nagas in the Nineteenth Century.* London: Oxford University Press, 1969.

Erndl, Kathleen. “Śerānvālī: The Mother Who Possesses.” In *Devi: Goddesses in India* edited by John S. Hawley and Donna M. Wulff, 173-194. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks.* Translated by Richard Philcox. New York: Grove Press, 2008.

Felman, Shoshana. “Turning the Screw of Interpretation.” *Yale French Studies* 55/56 (1977): 94-207.

———. *What Does a Woman Want: Reading and Sexual Difference.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993.

———.*The Juridical Unconscious*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2002.

Fenton, James. “The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.” *Newsletter (Museum Ethnographers Group)* 16, (April 1984): 37-40.

Fermor, Sharon. *Piero di Cosimo: Fiction, Invention and Fantasìa*. London: Reaktion Books, 1993.

Foucault, Michel. *Aesthetics, Method and Epistemology* Vol 2 of *Essential Works of Foucault.* Edited by James D. Faubion. Translated by Robert Hurley et al. London: Allen Lane, 1998.

Fraser, Robert. *The Making of The Golden Bough: The Origins and Growth of an Argument.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990.

Ambedkar, B.R. "Annihilation of Caste: An Undelivered Speech" in *Annihilation of Caste* London: Verso, 2014.

Freud, Sigmund. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* 24 vols, trans. James Strachey. London: The Hogarth Press, 1961.

———. "Heredity and the Aetiology of the Neuroses" (1896) *SE* 3 (1893-1899):141-156.

———. *The Interpretation of Dreams* Vol 1 (1900) *SE* 4.

———. "Psychoanalysis and the Establishment of Facts in Legal Proceedings,"(1906) *SE* 9 (1906-1908): 97-114

———. "Family Romances" (1909) *SE* 9 (1906-1908): 235-242.

———. "Character and Anal Erotism"(1908) *SE* 9 (1906-1908): 167-176.

———."Psychoanalytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia" (1911) *SE* 12 (1911-1913): 3-82.

———. "Totem and Taboo" (1913) *SE* 13 (1913-1914): vii-162.

———."Instincts and their Vicissitudes" (1915) *SE* 14 (1914-1916):122.

———. "The Unconscious" (1915) *SE* 14 (1914-1916): 159-215.

———. "Repression" (1915) *SE* 14 (1914-1916): 141-158.

———. "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death" (1915) *SE* 14 (1914-1916): 273-300.

———. "On Some Character Types Met With in Psychoanalytic Work" (1916) *SE* 14 (1914-1916): 309-333.

———. "The Uncanny" (1919) *SE* 17 (1917-1919): 217-256.

———. "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" (1920) *SE* 18 (1920-1922): 1-64.

———. "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" (1921) S*E* 18 (1920-1922): 65-144.

———. "Some Additional Notes on Dream Interpretation as a Whole" (1925) SE 19 (1923-1925): 123-138.

———. "The Future of an Illusion" (1927) *SE* 21 (1927-1931): 1-56.

———. "Fetishism" (1927) *SE* 21 (1927-1931): 147-158.

———. "Civilization and its Discontents" (1930) *SE* 21 (1927-1931): 57-146.

———. “New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis” (1933) *SE* 22 (1932-1936): 1-182.

———. “Why War” (1930) *SE* 22 (1932-1936): 195-216.

———.“Analysis Terminable and Interminable” (1937) *SE* 23 (1937-1939): 209-254.

———. “Constructions in Analysis” (1937) *SE* 23 (1937-1939): 255-270.

———. “Moses and Monotheism” (1939) *SE* 23 (1937-1939): 1-138.

———. *Gesammelte Werke: Chronologisch Geordnet.* London: Imago Publishing Company, 1993.

———. “Totem und Tabu” (1913) *GW* 9.

———. “Das Unbehagen in der Kultur” (1930) *GW* 14: 421-506.

———. “Die Zukunft einer Illusion” (1927) *GW* 14: 325-380.

———. *The Uncanny.* Introduced by Hugh Haughton. London: Penguin Classics, 2003.

———. *Murder Mourning and Melancholia*. Translated by Shaun Whiteside. Penguin Classics, 2005.

———.*The Psychology of Love.* Translated by Shaun Whiteside. London: Penguin, 2006.

———. *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality: The 1905 Edition*. Translated by Ulrike Kistner. Edited by Phillipe Van Haute and Hermann Westerink. London: Verso, 2016.

Fuss, Diana. *Identification Papers.* New York: Routledge, 1995.

Garland, Henry and Mary Garland (eds.). *The Oxford Companion to German Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Gilmour, David. *Curzon: Imperial Statesman*. London: John Murray, 1994.

Gourgouris, Stathis. *Dream Nation: Enlightenment, Colonization, and the Institution of Modern Greece*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.

Gupta, Amit Kumar. “Defying Death: Nationalist Revolutionism in India 1897-1938.” *Social Scientist* 25, no. 9/10 (Sep-Oct, 1997): 3-27.

Hartnack, Christiane. *Psychoanalysis in Colonial India.* New Delhi: Oxford, 2001.

Haughton, Hugh. “Introduction” to *The Uncanny*. London: Penguin Classics, 2003.

Hoad, Neville. “Arrested Development or the Queerness of Savages: Resisting Evolutionary Narratives of Difference.” *Postcolonial Studies* 3, no. 2 (2000): 133-158.

Hutton, J.H. *The Sema Nagas* with a Foreword by Henry Balfour. London: Macmillan and Co, 1921.

———. *The Angami Nagas*. London: Macmillan and Co, 1921.

Jain, Sanjeev and James Mills. "The History of modern psychiatry in India 1858-1947." *History of Psychiatry* 12, no.48 (December 2001):431-458.

Jose, Vinod K. and Afzal Guru. "Mulakat Afzal." *Caravan,*1 February, 2006.

Kanungo, Hem Chandra. *Account of the Revolutionary Movement in Bengal.* Kolkata: Setu Prakashani, 2015.

Kapila, Shruti. "The 'Godless' Freud and his Indian Friends: An Indian Agenda for Psychoanalysis." In *Psychiatry and Empire* edited by Sloan Mahone and Megan Vaughan, 124-152. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Kar, Bodhisattva. "Can the Postcolonial Begin? Deprovincializing Assam." In *Handbook of Modernity in South Asia: Modern Makeovers* edited by Saurabh Dube, 43-58. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011.

———. "Heads in the Naga Hills" in *New Cultural Histories of India: Materiality and Practices* ed. by Partha Chatterjee, Tapati Guha-Thakurta and Bodhisattva Kar, 333-369. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014.

———. "The Tragedy of Suryya Bhuyan." *Biblio* (May-June 2008): 26-27.

Kar, Parimal Chandra. *British Annexation of Garohills*. Calcutta: Nababharat Publishers, 1970.

Kipling, Rudyard. *From Sea to Sea*, Vol 1. London: Macmillan and Co, 1914.

Klein, Melanie. *Love Guilt and Reparation and Other Works 1921-1945.* London: Virago, 1988.

Kristeva, Julia. *Strangers to Ourselves*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.

Lacan, Jacques. *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis.* Translated by Dennis Porter. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997.

———. *Écrits.* Tranlated by Bruce Fink. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006.

Lane, Christopher. "Psychoanalysis and Colonialism Redux: Why Mannoni's 'Prospero Complex' Still Haunts Us." *Journal of Modern Literature* 25, no 3/4 (2002): 127-149.

———, ed. *The Psychoanalysis of Race*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

Laplanche, J. and J.B. Pontalis. *The Language of Psycho-Analysis.* Translated by Donald Nicholson Smith. London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1973.

Lear, Jonathan. *Open Minded Working Out the Logic of the* Soul. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998.

Levinas, Emmanuel. "The Trace of the Other." In *Deconstruction in Context,* translated by Alphonso Lingis and edited by Marc C. Taylor, 345-359. Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 1986.

Levy, Deborah. *Things I Don't Want to Know*. London: Penguin, 2014.

Löwy, Michael. *Fire Alarm: Reading Walter Benjamin's 'On the Concept of History'*. Translated by Chris Turner. London: Verso 2016.

Luithui, Luingam and Nandita Haskar, ed. *Nagaland File: A Question of Human Rights.* New Delhi: Lancer International, 1984.

Lupton, Mary Jane and Julia R. Lupton. "Annotated Bibliography of Claude Dagmar Daly (1884-1950)." *American Imago* 47, (1990):81-91.

Maclean, Kama. *A Revolutionary History of Interwar India*. London: Hurst, 2015.

Maddox, Brenda. *Freud's Wizard: The Enigma of Ernest Jones.* London: Murray, 2006.

Mannoni, Octave. "The Decolonisation of Myself." *Race and Class* 7, no. 4 (1966): 327-335.

———. "I Know Well, But All the Same." In *Perversion and the Social Relation* translated by G.M. Goshgarian, edited by Rothenberg, Foster, Žižek, 68-92. Durham: Duke University Press 2003.

———.*Prospero and Caliban : The Psychology of Colonization.* Translated by Pamela Powesland. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990.

Marriott, David. *On Black Men*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000.

Meltzer, Donald. *The Kleinian Development.* London: Karnac, 1998.

Mills, James. *The Pangsha Letters: An Expedition to Rescue Slaves in the Naga Hills*. Oxford: Pitt Rivers Museum, 1995.

———. *The Lhota Nagas.* London: Macmillan and Co, 1922.

Mitchell, Juliet. "The Law of the Mother: Sibling Trauma and the Brotherhood of War" *Canadian Journal of Psychoanalysis* 21, no 1 (2013): 145-159.

Moberly, L.G. "Inexplicable." *Strand Magazine* 54, (1917): 572-81.

Mukherjee, Meenakshi. “Anandamath: A Political Myth.” *Economic and Political Weekly* 17, no. 22(May 1982): 903-905.

Nandy, Ashis. *The Savage Freud and Other Essays on Possible and Retrievable Selves.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Nussbaum, Martha C. *The Clash Within: Democracy, Religious Violence, and India’s Future* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2008.

Panofsky, Erwin. “The Early History of Man in a Cycle of Paintings by Piero di Cosimo.” *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 1, no.1, (July 1937): 12-30.

Paskauskas, R. Andrew. *The Complete Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Ernest Jones 1908-1939*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Phillips, Adam. "Against Self-Criticism." *London Review of Books* 37 no. 5 (2015): 13-16, https://www.lrb.co.uk/v37/n05/adam-phillips/against-self-criticism.

Pitt Rivers, Augustus Henry Lane Fox. “Section H.—Anthropology.” In *Report of the Fifty Eighth Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science Held at Bath in September 1888*, 825-835. London: John Murray, 1889.

Playfair, Alan. *The Garos* with an Introduction by E.J. Bampflyde Fuller. London: David Nutt, 1909.

Radhakrishna, Meena. *Dishonoured by History: “Criminal Tribes” and British Colonial Policy.* New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2001.

Ramaswamy, Sumathi. *The Goddess and the Nation.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.

Rickman, John. “Claud Dangar Daly Lt-Col (Ret) 1884-1950,” *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 31, (1950): 290-291.

Ridgway, RTI. “Pathans.” In *Handbooks for the Indian Army*. Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1910.

Riley, Denise. *Words of Selves: Identification, Solidarity, Irony*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

———. “Affections Must Not.” In *Selected Poems.* London: Reality Street Editions, 2000.

Ronaldshay, Earl of. *The Heart of Aryavarta: A Study in the Psychology of Indian Unrest.* London: Constable and Company Limited: 1925.

Rose, Jacqueline. *On Not Being Able to Sleep*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

———. *Proust Among the Nations: From Dreyfus to the Middle East.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011.

———. *States of Fantasy.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

———. *The Last Resistance*. London: Verso, 2017.

———.*The Question of Zion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.

Roudinesco, Elisabeth. *Jacques Lacan: An Outline of a Life and History of a System of Thought*. New York: Polity Press, 1999.

Safouan, Moustafa*. Four Lessons of Psychoanalysis.*New York: Other Press, 2004.

———. *Jacques Lacan and the Question of Psychoanalytic Training*. Translated and Introduced by Jacqueline Rose. London: Macmillan, 2000.

Said, Edward W. *Freud and the Non-European*. With an Introduction by Christopher Bollas and a response by Jacqueline Rose. London: Verso, 2003.

Samanta, Amiya, ed. *Terrorism in Bengal: A Chronological Account of Violent Incidents from 1907 to 1939.* Calcutta: Government of West Bengal, 1995.

Sandler, Paulo. *The Language of Bion: A Dictionary of Concepts.* London: Karnac, 2005.

Sangari, Kumkum. *Politics of the Possible: Essays on Gender, History, Narratives, Colonial English.* London: Anthem Press, 2002.

Sarkar, Tanika. *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation: Community, Religion and Cultural Nationalism*. London: Hurst and Company, 2001.

———. "Rabindranath's Gora and the Intractable Problem of Indian Patriotism." In *Rabindranath Tagore: Gora A Critical Companion* edited by Nandini Bhattacharya, 45-66. Delhi: Primus Books, 2015.

Seligman, Charles. "Presidential Address. Anthropology and Psychology: A Study of Some Points of Contact." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 54, (Jan-Jun 1924) 13-46.

Seshadhari Crooks, Kalpana. "The Primitive as Analyst: Postcolonial feminism's access to Psychoanalysis." *Cultural Critique* 28, (Autumn, 1994): 175-218.

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. London: Boomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2006,

Shresth, Swati. "*Sahibs* and *Shikar*: Colonial Hunting and Wildlife in British India 1800-1935." PhD Dissertation, Durham: Duke University.

Silvestri, Michael. "An Irishman is specially suited to be a Policeman: Sir Charles Tegart and Revolutionary Terrorism in Bengal." *History Ireland* 8 (Winter 2000): 40-44.

Singh, Gajendra. *The Testimonies of Indian Soldiers and the Two World Wars: Between the Self and Sepoy*. London: Bloomsbury, 2014

Sinha, Tarun Chandra. "Development of Psychoanalysis in India." *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 47, (1966): 427-439.

———. *Psyche of the Garos.* Calcutta: Anthropological Survey of India, 1966.

———. "Dreams of the Garos", *Samiksa* 2, no. 1 (1948): 21-52.

———."A Psychological Study of Colour Preference of the Garos." *Samiksa* 5, no. 2 (1951): 75-120.

Sinha, Maharaja Bhupendra Chandra. *Changing Times*. Calcutta: Anthropological Survey of India, 1965.

Spillers, Hortense J. "All the Things You Could Be by Now, If Sigmund Freud's Wife Was Your Mother: Psychoanalysis and Race." In *Female Subjects in Black and White: Race, Psychoanalyis, Feminism* edited by Elizabeth Abel, Barbara Christian, Helene Moglen, 135-158. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

Solms, Mark. "Controversies in Freud Translation." *Psychoanalysis and History* 1, no. 1 (1999): 28-43.

Sophocles. *Antigone*. Translated by Robert Fagles. London: Penguin Classics, 2015.

Spivak, Gayatri. "French Feminism In An International Frame." *Yale French Studies* 62, (1981): 154-184.

———. *Outside in the Teaching Machine.* New York: Routledge, 1993.

Steedman, Carolyn. *Dust*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001.

Steiner, Ricardo. "A World Wide International Trademark of Genuineness? Some Observations on the history of the English translation of the Work of Sigmund Freud, Focusing mainly on his technical terms." *The International Review of Psychoanalysis* 14, (1987): 33-102.

Tagore, Rabindranath. *Gora.* London: Macmillan and Co., 1924.

Van Haute, Phillipe and Herman Westerink. Introduction to Freud, Three Essays (1905).

Vaidyanathan, T.G. and Jeffery J. Kripal (eds). *Vishnu On Freud's Desk: A Reader in Psychoanalysis and Hinduism.* Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Vaughan, Megan. *Curing their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991.

Warren, Alan. *Waziristan, The Faqir of Ipi, and the Indian Army: The North West Frontier Revolt of 1936-37.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Weber, Samuel. *The Legend of Freud.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

West, Rebecca. *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon: A Journey Through Yugoslavia*. London: Canongate Books, 2006.

Williams, Raymond. *Keywords.* London: Flamingo, 1981.

Winnicott, Donald. *Playing and Reality.* New York: Routledge, 2005.

Wolf, Christa. *City of Angels or, The Overcoat of Dr. Freud.* Translated by Damion Searls. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013.

Woolf, Leonard. *Growing: An Autobiography of the Years 1904 to 1911*. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovitch, 1975.

Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs Dalloway.* Toronto: Broadview Press, 2012.

Yule, Henry and A.C. Burnell. *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo Indian Words and Phrases, and of Kindred Terms, Etymological, Historical, Geographical and Discursive.*London: John Murray, 1886.

Zachhariah, Benjamin. "The Chemistry of a Bengali Life." In *Beyond Representation: Colonial and Postcolonial Constructions of Indian Identity* edited by Crispin Bates, 322 – 352. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Zaman, Rashed Uz."Bengal Terrorism and the Ambiguity of the Bengal Muslims" in *An International History of Terrorism: Western and Non Western Experiences* edited by J. Hanhimāki and J. Blumenau, 150-168. London: Routledge, 2013.

Zote, Mona. "Rez". Poetry International Website. http://www.poetryinternationalweb.net/pi/site/poem/item/13506. Accessed 28 September 2017.